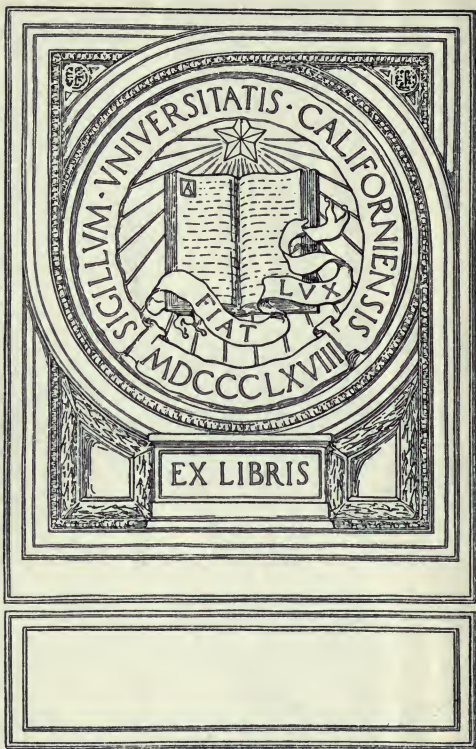






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ART FOR AMERICA.

ART FOR AMERICA.

BY
WILLIAM ORDWAY PARTRIDGE. *green*



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ROBERTS BROTHERS.
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P R E F A C E.

THE following essays I dedicate with all love to the American people, for whom they were written. The only purpose I have had, in doing this work, has been to raise art to its rightful place in the scheme of general education. I must thank the editor of the "Arena," Mr. B. O. Flower, and Mr. Edwin D. Mead, editor of the "New England Magazine," for the place they have given me in their respective magazines, and for their courtesy in permitting me to reprint such essays as they have published.

These essays make no claim to literary merit; but this saving grace they have,—namely, that they have been lived before they were written. It would sadden me if I did not believe they might have some influence, no matter how slight, toward bettering the art-idea in this land. I believe in the possibility of a great national art

for America, and I believe that such an art must be indissolubly bound up with the patriotic idea. There are dangers enough which threaten, it is true; but is not the same spirit which has held the country together and guided it through the past crises, alive to-day?

Of one thing I am sure, and that is that the men who are to mould the destiny of this nation in art or politics must be nurtured and developed upon its soil. One of the dangers which threatens our art, and I may say our manhood, is that of over-travel. We have much to learn from other nations, but we have more to learn from our own. We have as much to learn, for instance, from Japan as we have from France. No one nation can teach us all we must know. I have no sympathy whatever with the Americans who give up their native land and become pseudo-French or pseudo-Italian. Look at the men, for instance, who spend their lives in Rome or Paris. What do they produce? Pretty, idle, senseless statues and paintings that are neither good nor bad. It might be called a milk-and-water kind of art, a hybrid production, which is

neither American, nor French, nor Italian, nor anything that is worthy of men. The French surpass us easily on their own soil. The Americans who live and paint there are engaged in a futile rivalry. The French know this, and are laughing in their sleeves at us to-day. No! In the name of the lives that make this ground holy, let us be American or give up meddling in art, and take to something that is worthy of our forefathers.

How may we best bring about a great national art for this country? The simplest and surest way of doing so is by educating the children of the common schools, studying the new system of education, finding out what place art holds in it, and rounding out your children according to God's plan, and not to the abortion of it so dexterously practised in our schools. Give us a nation of finely developed and organized men, and our art will take care of itself.

We must look, then, to the public schools, because our art is not to depend on the few children nurtured with dangerous carefulness in high-class academies, where the humanities are

taught better than they are practised. We must look to the great people and not to a few epicures. It is their voice which is the voice of God and the voice of art. Greek art was great because of the great mind which stood behind it. Athens educated her people, while the children of Tyre and Sidon were merely trained. The men who made Greek art supremely great were of the same mould as those that died with Leonidas at Thermopylæ. The men who have made a national art possible for America are buried, many of them, in unknown graves in far southern battle-fields.

“Go tell at Sparta, thou that passest by,
That here, obedient to her laws, we lie.”

Let it be with us as it was with Athens; let us be known to posterity as a nation of roundedly developed men, living sanely within ourselves and not extravagantly upon ourselves. ¶ Let us have that large culture which becomes a Republic, bought and sealed with a great price. Under such conditions, art will grow as naturally as a flower grows in a garden when you have let in the sunlight and plucked out the

weeds which choked it round about. Art is as inevitable under such conditions as the succession of night by day. No amount of straining and striving will produce it. We must be it, live it, before we can produce it. Science teaches us that color resides in the eye that sees, not in the object looked upon. Let us look to it that the eye is single, in order that our whole body may be filled with light.

Let the world laugh at our national idiosyncrasies and our Yankee notions; whatever may be said of our Puritan ancestry, the enduring work of this people, its strength, and its vital energy are due to them and to the men who fathered them and made England great. It is the individuality of the nation, as of an artist, which is forever the most precious birthright. What shall we give or receive in exchange for that?

I thank my friend, Thomas Davidson, for the love which has inspired me to my highest effort in life and art.

WILLIAM ORDWAY PARTRIDGE.

MILTON, *March*, 1894.

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THE TRUE EDUCATION AND THE FALSE

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fool'd by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within, and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
SHAKESPEARE.

LET me define from the beginning what I mean by true and false education. The literal meaning of the word "education" will serve my purpose. This word is derived from the Latin *educere*, a leading or drawing out. Education means, then, a leading or drawing out of every human faculty. It is this, and nothing less, which I take to be the true education: anything less than this will do as a definition for the negative of my argument. If our common schools, as they exist to-day, tend to lead out every human faculty, they are fulfilling their mission; if, however, the curriculum of these schools does not include the studies which tend to draw out a child's higher nature, we must look upon them, not as institutions of true education, but

more as factories where children are taught to make a part of a thing, and where only one part of their nature is developed.

It is not my purpose to juggle with words, but to tell you plainly my hope for our public schools, and to say that, instead of thinking of curtailing art, music, and physical training in the round of daily study, we ought to be thinking of ways and means to introduce more thoroughly and largely these studies, which to the clear-eyed Greek were the essentials of education. At the close of "Sesame and Lilies" is found the following quotation, which bears directly upon our subject: —

"So with our youths. We once taught them to make Latin verses, and called them educated; now we teach them to leap and to row, to hit a ball with a bat, and call them educated. Can they plough, can they sow, can they plant at the right time, or build with a steady hand? Is the effort of their lives to be chaste, knightly, faithful, holy in thought, lovely in word and deed? Indeed it is with some, nay, with many, and the strength of England is in them."

So writes John Ruskin, one of the world's great educators. Let us follow out his thought a little, and see if the teaching of reading, writ-

ing (I mean chirography, and not composition), arithmetic, as it is drilled into a boy to-day, fits him to take his place among his fellow-men in a world of order, love, and beauty, and to sustain his part cheerfully, bravely, and temperately. It is a common saying to-day that schools are not made for genius; then I say to you that your schools are at fault, and the sooner they are brought into harmonious relation with the genius in every child, the better it will be for them and for the world.

And regarding the creative faculties of your children — who is taking care of these? The age is putting the receptive faculties of the child to their utmost tension, while the creative ones are starved. It is not right, it is not just. What are you doing to develop and preserve the dignity of manual labor? Have you set aside on your playground a site for a carpenter's shop, or a blacksmith's forge, or a chemical laboratory, or a machine shop? Many of our children have a contempt for manual labor, and it is our fault that it is so. The greatest moral teacher in the world was not ashamed to be a carpenter; and Elihu Burritt planned the good of mankind as he stood by his glowing forge.

A man never falls so low but that he may be dignified by some kind of manual labor. All this discernment must come, not alone through mathematics, but through a harmonious drawing out of those faculties which bring the child, and later the man, into relationship with his environment. Emerson may well say that "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind"; but are we not alive to-day to grapple with these obstinate things, and to turn them into their own proper paths?

It is a part of the whole wrong thinking about education, that study alone will make a boy great or develop his higher nature. Phillips Brooks once stopped the writer in the street, and said a man might study until he became a gray-head, and not be great. It was not in the grammar school at Stratford that Shakespeare learned the lessons which were to make him the articulate voice of England. The little Latin and Greek he got there would have made him, at best, but a sorry pedagogue. Still, "no man was ever wise by chance." The whole country round about was his school-house. Some fine spirit led his mind out of the narrow grooves of mere book-knowledge, into the way of looking

upon the whole world as his workshop, whether by the dreamy Avon side, in misty vales, by winding hedgerows, or in the stately churchyard, — no matter where, the boy learned to bring himself into relationship with every living thing, and to him everything was alive. It was a world of spirit. If the Stratford school did not furnish this order of education, it was not the child Shakespeare's fault.

Let us learn to look upon every child-face that comes before us as a possible Shakespeare or Michael Angelo or Beethoven: believe me, every child that comes up before you has hidden away somewhere in its being this precious capacity for something creative. We must change our attitude toward the common children. When we look upon each as a possible genius, then shall we add new dignity to human life. Wordsworth well said, —

“ Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come.”

Why do we neglect the words of our poet seers? The artistic world is rejoicing over the discovery in Greece of some beautiful fragments of sculpture, hidden far beneath the *débris* of centuries;

shall we not rejoice more richly when we are able to dig down beneath the uncouth surface of the commonest child that comes to us from our great cities, and discover and develop that faculty in him which is to make him fit to live in sobriety and usefulness with his fellow-men? Seeking for these qualities in the child, we shall best conserve, as is done in physical nature, the highest type, until we have raised all human life to a higher level. Then shall we have heaven in our midst.

This is the more possible because of the quick, expansive material with which we have to deal in our country. We start even in the race of life; we recognize no hampering bonds of priestcraft or tradition. The men who have filled the highest position in our State have come, often, from the lowliest grades in society. The lowliest child has in it something to command our respect. Let us have no more polishing of pebbles and dimming of diamonds. There are no pebbles: we but think so, not having the wit to discern the diamond in the rough.

Let us, then, unfold the whole nature of the child, and not a little corner of it. Let no ridi-

cule deter us from our desire to consider education in its true light. We are to teach these children, or rather to show them, the ways by which they are to make this world spiritually, as well as materially, their own: we are to be practical, but greatly, not meagrely, so. We are to teach them that, before doing great things, they must dream them; that the wonderful bridge that connects the throbbing heart of New York with its sister city, Brooklyn, was first a dream of that eminently practical engineer, Roebling.

We must bring into children's lives every poetic influence, to quicken their minds and develop the æsthetic nature. We speak much of the beauty of holiness — not enough of the holiness of beauty. Sappho sang, "Who is beautiful is good." Under the head of art should be included music, — not only singing in chorus, but the hearing of the best music we can obtain. Our popular concerts will do no good until you bring good music into the common schools. I would have the great violinists come, as they make a tour through our cities and towns, and play to the children. Be assured that the violin, with its appealing, sympathetic voice, will touch something in the child

that your book-knowledge can never reach, and the one whom you have considered the dullard of the class may be awakened and produce music for which the world is hungry. Many great artists would come for the mere asking. Great artists are magnanimous: in their hearts they would rather play and build for your children than for all the money you may pile up before them.

Suppose you go on filling your children with the things that are falsely called the rudiments or bases of education: will arithmetic fortify the youth against the temptations of the world? Will any amount of reading make him great-hearted? Our honest Longfellow claimed for him the right to see and share in the beauty of the universe.

We tell the child how big this world is, but how much do we show him of its wondrous beauty? Will he not turn upon us some day for this cruel negligence, for our contempt of the highest in him? Is not every murder, every crime against the community, a criticism upon our system of education? We have gone on from the animal state — let us not stop until we walk like angels! Fill your children with sweet



music and the high thoughts of your poets, and they will build up a fabric which in after life will withstand the attacks of care, sin, poverty, and grief; for they will have discovered something in life which the world can neither give nor take away. Nothing will be commonplace to them; for their imagination will color all life with its own rich hues, — just as science teaches us that color actually resides, not in the object, but in the eye that looks upon it. “We see but what we have the gift of seeing; what we bring we find.” If these ideas are radical, then count me as the most rabid of radicals; but I know and feel the time is coming when men will grasp this question of education in the right way, when they will work from within outward, and not try to thrust revelation upon the child before its nature has been prepared for it. All men are blind until this divine order or beauty in the universe has been revealed to them: order and beauty are synonymous terms.

It may be justly urged that we cannot have a teacher for every individual talent or disposition. This is true; but we may have large influences at work which shall reach and develop all children. We have but one sun, and yet by

its rays are developed and perfected all orders of flowers. The sweet perfume from the modest violet is lovingly drawn out; the rich color and luxurious odor of the Jacqueminot rose is likewise led forth by this universal educator. The influence of art is not unlike the effect of the sun's heat and light. There is not one living being on the earth's surface but is affected in some degree by the power of music, painting, sculpture, and poetry. We need as teachers men with a universal order of mind, men who have in their natures large charity and the broadest sympathy, and men who have nothing at stake in the political arena.

If, for instance, a child hates arithmetic and loves music, sympathetic leading-on will show him that to understand and produce the music he loves, he must know something of mathematics. Do not thrust before him the dry bones of a subject as a disagreeable skeleton, but clothe it with its living beauty. Again, if a child hates mathematics and loves to build, you can soon make it clear to him that, in order to build anything that will endure, or be sightly in the eyes of his fellows, he must have an idea of proportion, an idea of the relation of one thing

to another. When he once sees this necessity, in order to construct, to put into palpable form the ideas that possess him, he will soon acquire a sufficient knowledge of mathematics for his purpose. Let him look upon a photograph of the Parthenon, or any other triumph of engineering skill, until he appreciates the use of this science to mankind. There is nothing beautiful about the keyboard of a piano, but out of it may be brought sounds that move us to tears.

I have said enough, perhaps, to show that there is a right and a wrong way of approaching children, and that we have been teaching them too often the letter of the law, while we have ignored its spirit. Carry out the same order of reasoning which I have shown regarding mathematics and music, with the other branches of school study. Show that the arts of writing, chirography, and rhetoric are necessary to poetry and prose composition, and to acquiring a knowledge of what the world is, has been, and is capable of becoming. Was it not Aristotle who declared poetry to be truer than history? It is the spirit of a time that the poet sings, while the historian turns over its dry bones!

I pray you, employ the large way of teaching a child. Let the wide eyes of childhood look first and clearly at the wonderful beauty of the universe. Develop this wonder-loving spirit. Do not starve it by thrusting dry, uncanny things in its face. How many men are great enough to go back upon themselves, and understand, through such going-back, this complex child-nature, and so daily renew their patience, and minister to it gently and lovingly?

We have been used to look upon the children as being, to a certain degree, at fault; but we are at fault, not they. We call certain children stupid because we cannot drive them into the narrow ways we near-sightedly lay out for them. It is not the children, but we, who are stupid. Look again at the natural world; see how many different influences it takes to develop seed-life. See what preparation has gone before: the crystal must be dissolved, and the earth made ready: it is the law of evolution,—the lower must give way to the higher. If such thought is necessary to the proper development of a grain of corn, shall we not care more lovingly and thoughtfully for these little ones, with their

immortal possibilities, "while the dew is on the flower fresh and sweet"?

Not long ago, in one of our police courts, a man was convicted of the crime of theft, and sentenced to imprisonment. When asked if he had anything to say for himself, he replied only this, "I was taught to steal before I learned to read and write." Although the man had learned to read and write and count, he had not learned how to use his reading and writing, and what they were good for; he had learned these things as ends. No one had shown him that they were merely the keyboard, for the uttering of what was noble in himself, or for the understanding of what was beautiful and uplifting in the world. His reading and writing and mathematics were stepping stones to greater wretchedness and crime.

It is thought that education will be the saving of our country in the crises through which it must pass. The true education may actually save us; but the false education will do no more for us than it did in the past. Was it not Voltaire who called all men fools, and then placed loaded muskets in their hands?

By so doing has not such a one written himself down as the greatest fool of all? On what does the future safety of our country depend? On these magnificent war-vessels that are fitting out, with the possibility of doing such wonderful damage to human life and human happiness? I think not! Does it depend on the number of men we can bring into the field, and the perfection of their equipment? I think not! Upon what, then, does it depend? It depends upon our public schools, and the order of education we give the child. A poetess has well said that the cannon now speaks in the teacher's place.

At the dedication of the Bunker Hill monument, Daniel Webster spoke these words:—

“Let our age be an age of improvement. In a day of peace let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole vast fields in which we are called to act.”

So spoke one of America's greatest thinkers and orators. Longfellow has put for us in verse the same thought, in his noble poem of "The Arsenal at Springfield":—

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals and forts."

Follow back the history of any great life. Find out what element made that life great. In almost every instance you will find that it was not the ordinary schooling, but some sympathetic appreciation of the boy's capacity. Perhaps it was an old sailor, who helped the boy to carve a boat out of a block of wood, and by his tales of great ships and their voyages stimulated his ambition, and so made Columbus and a new world possible. Perchance it was a father, who stopped before a great statue and told his boy what it stood for, until the spirit within the child longed to come out and create great statues. It may have been the repetition to a child of some stirring poem that in after years led him to write great poems. Whatever it was, it must have been a sympathetic drawing out of the boy's facul-

ties, what we call true education, as opposed to the system of drilling and beating in, — the drowsy education, as some one has called it. An appeal was made to the imagination and the spirit within him.

The one supreme thing that is left for men to do in art to-day is the depiction of character. Browning declared toward the close of his life that the only thing he found worth studying was the development of the human soul:—

“Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent.”

If character, then, is destiny in man, so is it in a people. If order and temperance enable a man to live a useful, dignified, happy life among his fellows, it is equally true with that larger association of men which we call a nation. A sympathetic drawing and rounding-out of the child's character has enabled the man to live such a life as I describe; and what is true of the man's life may be made true of a people's life, so that the salvation and perpetuation of our republic will depend on what sort of training we give to mind and spirit in our public schools.

When we have thoroughly understood the influences which have made men great, and brought our schools into harmony with such influences, then and then only shall we have the true education. The present system is like looking through a distorted lens: it shows you many brilliant colors, yet the object is not enlarged harmoniously, but in a disproportionate way. Why is it that the poet dwells upon the education of field and street, and not of the schoolroom, and exclaims, —

“Perhaps there lives some dreaming boy, untaught
In schools, some graduate of field and street,
Who shall become a master of the art”?

Every one of us must be on the lookout for such a child. Search every face. Looking into the face of Jesus, the carpenter's son, little did the neighbors dream He was the Christ.

Is it possible to make our schools so complete that they shall round out the nature of every child? If we say “No” to this, it is an acknowledgment of weakness. Let us see, then, what can be done. We have already spoken of the introduction of music into the schools. I mean great music, not alone that

of the singing master. Nothing will tend to develop the imagination so much as this. Then the children ought to be taken once a fortnight, at least, to hear some fine orchestra or good opera. Tune their ears to fine harmonies.

We should have, moreover, no blank walls in our schoolrooms. It is just as important to hang reproductions of great paintings and frescos upon the walls, as it is to place books under their eyes. Many of the city children have never seen a meadow or the country in the springtime. They know nothing of the sweet delights of nature and her delicious silences. These are all shut out from them. It may be that they will never have an opportunity to see nature at her best. City life becomes so habitual that many of them will never care for such delight, never appreciate it if the opportunity is offered to them in after life. How, then, shall we keep alive and cherish in the child this love of nature, this sacred kinship with all green things? I know of one sure way, — by placing before their eyes the pictures of nature's sweetest haunts, which great artists have transcribed for us

with such loving care. I believe it has been with many others as with the writer. Born in, and bred to, city life, he has learned to love beautiful nature from beautiful pictures. The time is not far distant when the introduction of pictures and statues will be considered as essential to our schoolrooms as are the windows; then shall we be truly, greatly economical. We shall then give men a new reason why they should care for their bodies and keep them at their best:—

“To man propose this test —
 Thy body at its best,
 How far can that project
 Thy soul on its lone way?”

By thus inculcating a love for art in a child, you will make of him a citizen who will help to embellish your cities, making them like Athens, Venice, and Florence, — beautiful forever.

But we must have more than this. We must have workshops of all kinds. There must be the same emulation and friendly rivalry in the production of a good piece of carpentering work, or piece of machinery, as there is now in the game of baseball, football,

etc. Do not do away with your baseball-ground, but set aside a part of it for a carpenter's shop, a machine shop, and a forge. Let the boy learn the material forces of nature, and how he can best make use of them for the good of his fellow-men, and for his own uplifting. If any manual work is to be pursued successfully in after life, the tool must be placed in the hand of the child.

Too much time, interest, and excitement are given to-day to the so-called "sports;" too little to the precious handicrafts and arts. Teach children wood-carving, which has become almost a lost art, but which was carried to such wonderful perfection by Della Quercia in Siena in the fifteenth century. All such instructions will prepare them, without their knowing it, for the more serious duties of life. Let them learn that there is something in this life better than baseball; that man is created for something higher. Do not do away with any healthful exercise, but let these games take their proper places. The true education is not entirely physical, not entirely intellectual, nor is it entirely moral, but it is all three in proportion. Let us call for mental,

as well as physical, work. Let us offer prizes of silver cups for a good piece of handiwork, and so keep before our children a proper regard for the dignity of manual labor.

Cannot debates be established between different schools and classes? Assign characters to the different boys, — the character of Hamilton to one, Jefferson to another, Washington to a third: in this way they will become interested in our history in a natural way, and in a way they can never forget. We may even go so far as to hope that each school may have a small theatre where plays may be produced at festal seasons, and where children may learn what a good play is, and what is truly dramatic. And a serious order of criticism and critics may be developed. In fact, no influence should be shut out from the child which tends to develop man; all may be softened, however, and modified to suit his nature. Every public school should have its telescope. An opportunity should be given one evening in the week for children to come and study the heavens in their silent majesty. When we have done even a part of what is here suggested, the difficulty will have solved itself,

and one of the greatest problems of modern life, namely, what men and children shall do with their leisure hours, will find natural solution. I offer this practical solution, namely, the true education in the public schools.

Some one, I imagine, here says to me, These plans of yours are all very beautiful, but how are we to make them possible? My answer to him is this: The first step towards making them possible has been taken by our showing our willingness to consider them at all. The second step, and perhaps the final one, will be when each one of us tries, in some large or humble way, to bring about the changes suggested, gradually to substitute the true education for the false. Our present system we may call good; "but humanity sweeps onward." To-morrow must see us a step higher in the scale of civilization, and we must not rest until our children shall embody the highest good that we see in the highest type of child-life to-day. This new child must be a resultant spiritual being.

The things for which we speak to-day have been termed by a certain part of the community "fads." If they be "fads," then let us

have "fads" without end. The word "Gothic," once used in scorn, came in time to designate the most graceful style of architecture, and the most lovely, perhaps the world has ever known. Let no penny-wise and pound-foolish cry of economy deter us from seeing that the truest economy is in getting the best we are worthy of, and producing the highest we are capable of. We shall not be discouraged, if the Philistines carry their point for a moment. We have learned that the return of the wave prepares for a more magnificent upward sweep. If we are driven back, it will not be for long: we shall return with a new life, myriad-colored, rich, God-given, and God-giving, and carry it far upon the blank meadows, to enrich and beautify them for all time. "The crutch of Time does more than the club of Hercules."

Such education as I have described prepares the ground for a higher order of revelation than we yet dream of. When it comes, we shall not need mediums and spiritualists: every man will be a medium, when he shall have learned to give the God within him a right to speak. Let us give our children something that will raise them above the power of chance.



I am appealing to you for the larger education of a people. No amount of learning will save our country, in the present and future, from the evils that threaten her; nothing will do so but a higher order of living, and the only way to have such living is to begin with the children. Conversions like that of Saint Paul are rare; but a little love and sympathy will win any child.

I would dwell especially and again upon the careful finding out of the creative element or faculty in every child, — what that child can produce. This you will find out most easily by asking or studying what the child best loves. Our famous painter, William Hunt, once said to a parent who came with his child as a pupil to the studio: "Tell me how much your child loves this work, not what he has thus far accomplished." This order of education, from its very nature, will lead the child to consider the good in others and to show a proper respect for their rights.

"Childhood has its secrets and its mysteries; but who can tell or who can explain them? We have all roamed through this silent wonder-wood; we have all once opened our eyes in blissful astonishment as the

beautiful reality of life overflowed our souls. We knew not where or who we were; the whole world was ours, and we were the whole world's. That was an infinite life, without beginning and without end, without rest and without pain. In the heart it was as clear as the spring heavens, fresh as the violet's perfume, hushed and holy as a Sabbath morning.

"What disturbs this God's peace of the child? How can this unconscious and innocent existence ever cease? What dissipates the rapture of this individuality and universality, and suddenly leaves us solitary and alone in a clouded life?"

So wrote Max Müller in the "Memories" that make up his wonderful story of German love. Let us remember this truth, which Schiller also aptly puts when he writes that "common natures pay by what they do, noble natures by what they are." And what is more noble and holy than a child? It is we, really, who go to school to be taught of these children. The older we grow, and the deeper and richer our life becomes, the more readily do we understand and appreciate the sayings of the world's inspired teachers; especially of that quiet, unassuming carpenter, who once drew a little child to Him, and told His listening disciples that they must attain to the

same purity of heart before they could enter the kindgom of heaven. What a great spiritual truth the Master spoke! We are apt to think that these wondrous eyes of childhood are given to them to con over the books we place before them. It is well for us to dwell sometimes on the thought that these eyes are theirs to let out the light of the pure soul within. Was it not Wordsworth who said, —

“To me, the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears”?

In this appeal for the divinity in the child, I believe I am making a plea for the most essentially practical and true order of education. I go back again to the original idea of sympathy; and such sympathy exists, I have endeavored to show, only where there is a giving and taking. Let us, as teachers, not forget that we are pupils as well. Let us strive, in our time and place, to learn the lessons which shall fit us also for the highest life.

AN AMERICAN SCHOOL OF SCULPTURE

But art itself, which is the faculty of perceiving and expressing the leading character of objects, is as enduring as the civilization of which it is the best and earliest fruit.

TAINÉ.

IN order to know how the American people rank to-day in the art of sculpture, and what possibilities are ours for the development of a great national art, we must determine, first, what constitutes greatness in plastic art, and secondly, what are the conditions that produce such greatness. Having considered these two questions, we shall be able to decide, by comparing our conditions with those of other great art-epochs, what probability there is that America will achieve distinction in the art of sculpture.

We shall have to review briefly the history of those nations which have achieved such distinction; the cause of their success and how their art arose; its highest period and its

decadence. Then, applying the tests of experience and history to our time, we shall be able to form our conclusions upon facts.

· All men, no matter what their state of civilization, have practised the art of sculpture. From the first, men have had pleasure in imitating natural objects and sounds. From this love of imitation, the art of sculpture came into existence. While all men have the imitative faculty, but few are creators; and a piece of carving can be called a work of art only when it embodies an æsthetic or artistic idea. The mere imitation of a natural object is not sufficient; art demands that something be added to the natural. No better definition can be given, perhaps, than that of Bacon. "Art," he says, "is man added to nature." Such art we are wont to call ideal or supernatural; that is, something in harmony with and embodying our highest thought. Ideal art, then, is the embodiment of a thought; such embodiment alone has the right to be called fine art. Art that lifts us above the commonplace and trivial, into the calm regions of the infinite, cultured people are wont to call great. Art, to be great and ideal, must appeal

to the wide intelligence of a people, and it must express their noblest life.

The art of sculpture has its limits; its laws are firmly fixed, and plastic ideas can be properly expressed only by one who understands its conditions. We shall see, then, that to speak plastically, or to embody a thought in harmonious and enduring form, requires knowledge, self-restraint, and a mastery over the material from which the thought is to be cut or fused. This art requires complete knowledge of the limitations and laws governing plastic art, and thought sufficient to create a suitable idea. The sculptor must also have acquired sufficient technical power to master the material he works in, and to make it obedient to his thought. A sculptor's natural vehicle of expression is form, as is music to the musician.

A work of art is the natural product or result of refined and cultured living. It is so of necessity. Then, too, experience and history prove it to be so. A modern Frenchman, with his distorted ideas of life and abnormal moral conceptions, could no more produce a statue like the Venus of Melos, than could Phidias,

living in the calm, normal, refined atmosphere of Hellas, have produced a figure like a Diana of the French Salon. An artist is the voice of his people and time. It cannot be otherwise, or the time will not own him. History shows that great art has existed only where great ideas were current; and history also shows that every statue or monument of artistic worth has come of an intelligent people, and come, not isolated, but together with other like works of art, and where schools of sculpture have existed. There is no exception to this rule. As in later days Shakespeare was the natural climax of the Elizabethan age of letters and dramatics, so was Phidias, in antiquity, the result of the great age of Pericles, and Michael Angelo the perfect flower of the Renaissance. A great critic has shown that we may trace a work of art back, not only to the period and school which produced it, but to the artist himself, and the very time of his life when he created it. The rise, climax, and decadence of an art is one with the rise, climax, and decadence of a people.

While much of the carving done by prehistoric nations, and by the monks of the

Middle Ages, is interesting from an archæological and historical standpoint, and from the patience and labor expended upon its production, it cannot properly be classified with the fine arts. There are peoples of antiquity who had no great original art, and yet were known throughout the then civilized world for their wide commercial importance. The Phœnicians were such a people. When a nation has no ideas worthy to be perpetuated, no sculptor arises to put them in enduring form. So, Tyre and Sidon, famous in their day, are known to us only as lying between Egypt and Assyria, and copying the art-idea of both these nations. A nation, then, to be great in art, must have creative genius, and that genius must find complete and rounded expression. So we may pass over the crude arts that antedated the great monumental art of Egypt, and also those that came after her, and all peoples whose art idea has been merely imitative, decorative, or fantastic.

Coming to Egyptian art, one should understand, first, the period, secondly, the school, and thirdly and naturally, the artist himself. Carlyle speaks to our purpose when

he calls Dante the articulate voice of the Italian people, and Shakespeare the voice of England.

Taine the critic was, no doubt, thinking of Egypt when he said that every school degenerates and falls, simply through its neglect of exact imitation and its abandonment of the living model. If he intended this statement to apply to schools of art in general, he is in error. History shows that almost every school that has existed has fallen into decadence through a too close following of human models, a too exact imitation, resulting in utter realism, which has meant and still means utter degradation of art. It is also true that a neglect of the human model, and a dry, literal imitation of antique casts, is as bad as the other extreme. If imitation were the chief end of art, as some claim it is, the man who makes plaster casts from life would do better work than the sculptor. No piece of sculpture can, by the most careful study, be made so like as a death mask or a cast from the living model; and yet who would think of comparing such a cast with a statue?

The processes of casting furnish valuable

data for a work of art, but are only means to an end. No sculptor intends, I take it, to make a statue so like life that the spectator shall be deceived and think it to be alive. Such attempts always end in the art of the waxwork show. Is not one of the chief attractions in sculpture the pure white or amber-tinted marble from which it is cut, and which is in no particular like life? In entering the church of San Pietro-in-Vincoli, in Rome, to see the Moses of Michael Angelo, one is led past a painted statue of the Virgin, actually clothed, and evidently made to resemble real life. What a contrast between the art of the image-maker and that of the sculptor! The former, trivial, debased, panders to the credulities of a superstitious people; and for all its dressing, it is far from life in form, color, and spirit, having in common with it only the externals of dress. The latter, a spiritual symbolical interpretation of life, the firm embodiment of enduring will and faith that does not falter. Moses, not as he was in flesh, blood, and mantle, but as he is for all time in spirit; an indomitable leader of the chosen people, one who has actually walked and talked

with God, sublimely calm, the embodiment of noblest human dignity.

Let us understand that imitation belongs merely to the technical side of art. We must not belittle its office, nor must we make it all-sufficient. We cannot have a great art through a mere system of mechanics, no matter how complete or perfect it may be. We are driven back to the critic who says, "Art is man added to nature." The sublime sibyls of Michael Angelo are sublime because they have passed through the crucible of his masterful genius; born as much of his intelligence as of the models who posed for him. To the fine physical forms which he selected in human nature, he added the poetic beauty of his own thought and soul. What this was, we may see in his sonnets:—

"What the cloud doeth
The Lord knoweth,
The cloud knoweth not.
What the artist doeth,
The Lord knoweth;
Knoweth the artist not?"

Having once understood the man's rounded nature, we can better understand how he created these inspired virgins. One may urge

that they are not like life, and they are not like the life that passed his studio door each day; but somewhere he had seen such beings. In the subdued light of a silent cathedral, or against the evening skies beyond Florence, or at some brilliant festival, somewhere, no matter where, he had seen women like these. To imitation he added memory and poetic feeling, and produced, in their calm, dignified sweetness, these immortal creations.

In endeavoring to show that art is not mere imitation, it has been shown that art is not realism; and we come back to the point first urged, that great art is ideal. It is the essential of a person that art produces, that fleeting something (shall we call it spirit?) in a face that lifts it out of the crowd and fastens it upon our memory. We may call this character as well as spirit. We have shown that art is the spiritual representation of an idea or of a person. While there are different manifestations of the ideal, varying as different peoples vary, all ideal arts have had this in common, — that they uplift, dignify, and ennoble human life and human thought.

We have omitted to mention an important

factor in the artist's composition. It is the power for artistic selection. When this power has been cultivated, we call it taste. To the inborn trait must be added much wise seeing. This instinct for selection, or taste, is a distinctive characteristic of the great art eras, as well as of great artists.

To quote again a great critic, regarding the object of art: "The end of a work of art is to manifest some essential or salient character, consequently some important idea, clearer and more completely than is attainable from real objects." Art manifesting the highest aspirations of man must, to be great, be intelligible to all, and not merely to a chosen few. The great artists of all time have been rounded men and products of a complete and advanced civilization, and great arts have naturally been the same.

Having discussed our first question, namely, what greatness is in art, and more particularly sculpture, let us consider the conditions that have been found necessary to produce such great art and artists. If genius in man is like the vital, germinating force in all seed life, so, like this force, does it depend on benign-

nant and congenial surroundings. A tempered atmosphere is needed to develop that which otherwise would remain undeveloped, or at best remain an abortive growth. Genius in art is dependent upon prevailing tendency, the trend of life, what ideas or purpose may be current; and these decide what manifestation, if any, genius shall take on. To the begetting of a great art, certain moral and political conditions have been found necessary. Calm joy and clear faith are present in all great works of art. People given over to scepticism and despondency seldom produce a great statue or monument. A nation must enjoy a certain tranquillity if it is to practise the plastic arts. Statues must be thought out.

Prosperity, too, is necessary to the development of a rounded art. Art cannot flourish in abject poverty. The conditions of life and society must be such as to enforce a proper respect for the artist's calling. Ancient Rome never had a native artist, because the calling was thought undignified and effeminate. An artist, to produce great work, must be a part of the highest culture of his time. Ruskin has said that he should be fitted for the best

society and keep out of it. Is it not truer that he should be fitted for the best society and keep in it? No great art is born of an attic studio alone. Art must have breadth and depth, must strike its roots deep into the soil upon which humanity lives, if it is to live. If it is not so, it will become the dry, hard, suffering, ascetic art of the monasteries, that cannot stand the light and joy of every day. Great artists, then, are heirs to all that has gone before, as well as part and parcel of their epochs. Great art may be pathetic as well as joyful, but never despairing; it is the pathos of unstable man looking upon the calm, eternal repose of the mind's creations. The pathos, after all, is subjective, rather than objective. In the joyful eras of time, the conditions of life have been such that men have had leisure to create and care for the embodiments of their noblest aspirations; and wishing to perpetuate such ideals, they have put them in stone or lasting bronze.

Let us look at this question of condition more closely. Taking the Greek school, for example, which attained the highest perfection possible, what conditions had it more

favorable to sculpture than had Egypt and Assyria, from which Greece took her beginning in art? These nations furnished each an indispensable letter of an alphabet, which, in the hands of the clear-eyed Greek, was made to express his free-born intelligence, his symmetrical idea of human life, and the forces that govern it.

The first condition of Greek life was freedom. The Greek citizen served neither priest nor king. He elected his own magistrates and pontiffs, and might, in turn, be elected to any office himself. He was liable to be called upon to judge important political cases in the tribunal, and to decide grave matters of state in the assemblies. Every man was a trained soldier as well as a politician. It was necessary to be able to protect one's self from a possible inroad of the barbarians. All men were eligible to national offices. The warfare of that day called for personal prowess and agility, and the individual was developed to his highest possible capacity, capable of the utmost human endurance. The producing of fine physical form was a chief art among the Greeks. The Olympic games consisted of

a triumphal display of the nude figure. Before the eyes of the whole nation, the Greek youth contended for supremacy. Poets chanted the praises of the victor, and his name was given to the Olympiad. His native city received him in triumph, and the deeds of his prowess became her pride. Many tales are told of the excessive admiration and constant joy which the Greek had in perfection of human form. The costume was light and easily put off, while the long, sweeping folds of the mantle gave dignity and grace to the draped figure. We know that the flower of Athenian youth entered into these contests; and it is recorded that Sophocles, when a youth, and distinguished for his beauty, stripped off his garment to dance, and chant pæans. Phidias not only entered to admire and study the nude form at these joyful festivals, but was wont himself to contend; so he knew from experience all possible movements of the human body and every expression of the face. At the baths, too, sculptors had the opportunity of studying the human figure in a thousand listless, graceful attitudes.

Not only did the Greek admire a finely

developed human form, but he considered it to be actually the abode of divinity. To him the body was the temple of the spirit, as the word is used in its pagan interpretation. It was natural for the Greek to seek an enduring expression for the beautiful human forms which it was the chief end of his existence to develop; and a successful athlete, when crowned, was entitled to a statue.

The Greek system of education included all that Delsarte has sought to formulate. The educated Greek had an abounding faith in the moral government of the universe, and his life was not harassed or disquieted by anxious doubt. At peace with himself and with his gods, he had time and inclination to cultivate the beautiful arts; and all his statuary is the reflection of a serene state of mind, well adapted to plastic thought. In this healthful atmosphere, sculpture found nothing to retard its growth. We have seen it fettered by priestcraft in Egypt, and by unvarying conventionality in Assyria. We have discussed the conditions necessary to the successful growth of sculpture, and we have seen that these conditions belong to Greece more than

to any country, perhaps, before or since. The Athenian had abundant leisure. His work was done by slaves. But this leisure was not given over to bloody shows, as was the case with the more brutal Roman, but was devoted to intellectual and physical education. The gymnasium of that day was the great art-school, where the sculptor might bring his clay and study the youth as they ran, wrestled, hurled the spear, or threw the discus. On festival occasions, in the choral and orchestral dances, was seen every beautiful position and movement of the human body.

The greatest Greek sculptor, Phidias, lived at the same time as the greatest architect, Ictinus, the most revered philosopher, Socrates, and the distinguished dramatist, Sophocles. We see, then, that the age which produced the greatest men in literature, art, and science produced the grandest works of sculpture in Greece. We know that Pericles, the chief statesman of that era, was the friend of Phidias, and could, no doubt, talk as intelligently about art as Phidias could converse about letters and affairs of state.

Athenian civilization was at its zenith. The

fragments which remain of the frieze and pediment groups of the Parthenon exhibit the handiwork of a firmly poised, symmetrical mind, and a hand thoroughly trained to execute its bidding. Were we not charmed with the perfect proportion and satisfying beauty of the whole, it would be easy to lose ourselves in the subtlety of finish and the delicate relation of plane to plane. Dignity, reverence, and self-control are the chief characteristics, and must have distinguished the man who created these marvellous works. Supreme knowledge of the laws and limitations of sculpture is shown. Each figure is perfectly adapted to the place it fills.

We may take these sculptures as typical of the symmetrical, harmonious, and completely rounded Greek life which gave them existence. Each man bore easily and unconsciously the political and social duties laid upon him by the state. That the Greeks were a people of infinite possibilities, and capable of indefinite expansion, may be seen by the way in which they represent repose in action. The Greek knew where to place his climax. His emotional nature was subordinated to his intelli-

gence. There is no running riot; something is forever kept back. We feel that we may any day find some statue more beautiful than the last. His nature is at times dramatic, never theatrical. All this can be seen in his sculpture more than any other manifestation of his genius. Sculpture was the soul and the central art of Greece, and must remain forever its most splendid attraction.

After six hundred years of effort, Rome conquered Greece, and robbed her of her art treasures to decorate her own gaudy villas. Glancing for a moment at the condition of national and private life at Rome, we shall see why she never produced a great art or even a single distinguished sculptor. Could we have followed Greek art from the moment of her supreme glory to the second period of her career, of which epoch Praxiteles was the most illustrious creator, we should have seen her stripped of her sublimity, but still beautiful. The distinguishing characteristic of this second epoch, when the decadence of art had begun, was a sensuous loveliness. The spiritual meaning was becoming more and more confused, the standards of life were low-

ered, and all that was ennobling and poetical in the Greek religion was fast becoming lost in affectation. As life was degraded, art followed its footsteps. Art had still, however, its canons of modesty. After the death of Praxiteles, sensual representation became its chief object.

To be a great artist in Greece was to be the equal of the greatest in the land. In Rome it was not so. Artists were relegated to the mechanic classes. The Roman was a distinct realist, and never rose above the level of portraiture and imitation. The chief object of Roman life was to possess and dominate. Amid such selfish and ignoble surroundings, art could not flourish. Cæsar, Agrippa, and Augustus affected a love for the fine arts. The plundering of Greece finally led to the establishment of a second-rate school at Rome, which we may call the Græco-Roman. The conditions of life in Rome were utterly opposed to the creation or development of a national school that can, with any propriety, be called great. Rome's chief art was warfare, and in this she excelled. Public and private life was immoral to the point of licentiousness.

Rome may be quoted as a negative example, to show the conditions under which art cannot exist, or reach any lofty development.

The little art which Rome possessed was swept away or buried by the barbarian hordes. What followed upon the invasions is painful enough, when we think of monuments mutilated that were once the glory of Greece. In the ten centuries that follow upon the fall of Rome there is no art worthy of record; nor has this brutalized, debased existence any direct bearing upon the subject. The conditions under which men lived were not those from which art is developed.

With the Gothic period, new life was infused into sculpture, as well as into architecture. But sculpture was for the most part decorative and so much the handmaiden of architecture, that it is difficult to separate one from the other. The workmen who carved the ornaments of these vast Gothic cathedrals became, by practice and aspiration and by study of new-found classical models, the sculptors who formed the early Italian Renaissance. Human life was taking on new aspects. Man's restless, feverish desires were satisfied by the new

ideals which Christianity had planted in his breast. Life became joyful once more, as it was in ancient Greece, and expressed itself in manifold lovely forms, weird, mystical, and enchanting. Sculpture was more personal than with the Greek. Life was more direct, and every moment, to the Christian, was of divine importance.

There was a happy blending in this Renaissance period of the grand style with a style so tender and full of human affection, that we may best characterize it by the word "Christian." Human life was again serious, beautiful, and expansive. Human rights were respected, and law was re-established. Life became once more normal, intelligent, and free; and art, corresponding to these conditions, arose and was developed to a marvellous degree of perfection. Donatello and Michael Angelo are the men whose art makes up and colors the new-found Renaissance school. The art of Donatello shows classical influence, and that of Michael Angelo consummate knowledge of antique sculpture. The greatest men of this school in sculpture were roundedly developed men of broad ideas and liberal cul-

ture. The relief work of Donatello is known throughout the world. It is tinged, but sweetly, with the mystical spirit of those who created Gothic art. It is a happy blending of a contented, Christian living, with calm, classical feeling for outline and form.

We have already spoken of the art of Michael Angelo, and need not return to it now. Art was again down-trodden, or lost sight of, in the scepticism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Life was not worthy of perpetuation in sculpture. Human thought was too fickle and changeable. So we may pass over the interlude after of the Italian Renaissance, until we come to the modern re-birth of art in France. France was the cradle of modern sculpture. Whatever criticisms or strictures we may see fit to make upon French sculpture, we must give France credit for the splendid and fearless way in which she initiated a new art era. In dealing with the modern art of France, it is difficult to be just, —to hold the matter at arm's length, as it were, and look upon its every side. We are apt to be fascinated with its brilliant qualities and forget that the first test by which we must

judge it, is whether or not it be sculptural. While it has produced some fine work and isolated statues, here and there, taken as an art, as a school of sculpture, it cannot be called great, — not in the sense, certainly, in which we have applied the term to the art of Greece and that of the Italian Renaissance. The French have shown intimate knowledge of the human form, together with much technical skill. Certain of their statues exhibit action and force and even original genius. If the conditions of French life had not demanded the sensual realism that dominates their art, the art of France might have become great. Then, too, this realistic tendency has carried them so far that their statues are little more than literal copies of the nude models one may see at the Julian schools or at the academy. The statue of Saint John, by Bodin, is only a common Italian model of a low type, with a head that forbids any intellectual activity. The statue is an exact copy of this model. This example may stand for almost all of their statues. The too close following of the living model has led them into a style that argues a sure decadence. French sculpture reflects

French life. Can we call that life great? I think not; nor can we call their art great. The conditions of life in France are not true and noble enough, not pure and frank enough, in their essence, to produce a great and lasting art, and no amount of artifice will enable her to do so. It is clever, brilliant, if you will; but no one can say that France has produced a great school of sculpture. Is not the supreme test for work of art this: Does it teach us to live better, more calmly and greatly? If not, it cannot be called great and will not endure.

The beginnings of our modern school were made by men who had studied in Italy and France, many of them in both schools. Of the early American school of sculpture, which has almost entirely passed away and left to us, alas, so many dull, lifeless pseudo-Greek works, it is scarcely worth while to speak. No sculpture of this school rose even to the level of Canova or Thorwaldsen, and these sculptors were simply imitators of the Greek school.

We come now to our own epoch; to men like St. Gaudens, Warner, French, Ward, and, among the older men, Thomas Ball, and some



others whom I need not mention. This school has had courage and thought sufficient to escape from that pseudo-classical thralldom which had made slaves and imitators of their predecessors. They are the pioneers or early settlers in the new art-era which is dawning upon America. And are not the conditions of our life, as we hold them calmly away and look at them from an abstract standpoint, such as to promise a great national art for this country?

We, like the Greeks, are free men. The conditions of our life, the new life that is beginning everywhere, are much the same as those which existed in Athens in her palmy days of art. Education is free and universal. We are not harassed by warfare, or by a military system that takes a number of the best years of a man's life and devotes them to military routine. We are a prosperous people; abject poverty is rarely found. Then, too, we have numerous processes for reproducing works of art, and carrying them into every home in the land, so that all may know what other people have achieved in art and letters. We are the heirs, more than any people, perhaps, to-day, of the past history of the world. Life with

us is, in the main, frank and open. Every man is supposed to have some occupation. Our religion does not fetter us. We are free to represent what we will in sculpture or painting, so long as our representation be not ignoble or licentious. There are laws prohibiting representations of this order. We are a people who love the beautiful; this is amply manifested by our poets, historians, and novelists. Our art is yet in its youth; but there is something in the American genius akin to the Greek, — a most precious quality: that power to be evolved and evolve itself unendingly; capacity for indefinite expansion. So far, it has shown itself chiefly in science and mechanics; but these are the natural precursors of art epochs. Among the Continental nations of Europe, we are held to be a great people. Is it not natural to assume, then, that our art, when it has had time for a proper and rounded development, will be great also? We have now some of the best examples of monumental sculpture in the world. I may mention a few examples, such as the "Farragut" of St. Gaudens; a number of fine statues by Daniel French; the Governor Buckingham statue, by

Warner, the "Washington" by Thomas Ball in Boston, the Washington statue by Ward, in Wall Street, and many others.

If, then, our country shall follow the traditions of the past, shall take its example from the successes, and its warnings from the failures, of nations which have preceded it in art, we may fully expect a great art era for America. We may never reach the height attained by Greece, in the days of Phidias or Praxiteles, but yet even this is not impossible.

THE OUTLOOK FOR SCULPTURE IN AMERICA

IN discussing the possibility, or probability of America's achieving distinction in the art of sculpture, we must look for a little at the art and artists of other peoples, both past and present. We must consider the conditions of life which have produced great art and great artists. It is easy to establish the fact that the great artists of all times have been not only men of large endowment, but men who participated in the culture of their time and had their share in creating whatever ideas were uppermost in civic, political, as well as æsthetic, life. The artist's calling in Greece was held to be respectable and desirable; not even more, the artist who achieved success in his profession was treated with the same distinction as the poet, philosopher, and statesman. Artists in that time were men trained not only in the technique of art, but, moreover, in the art of thinking. It was held of chi

importance that the artist should have great ideas to express, as well as sufficient technical ability to embody them. Education in those days meant literally a drawing out, and rounding out of every faculty. From the study of the frieze of the Parthenon, where we may read better than in history what Athenian life actually was, and to what sublime heights it rose, we may know to what order of man Phidias belonged and how to classify him. No man could have produced this work who was not essentially great; and great in the sense of magnanimous. The work exhibits not only masterly intelligence and complete technical achievement, but it shows itself to be the work of a finely organized, great-souled being. This is evident in the breadth and simplicity of the style, and the freedom from all artifice. The petty tricks and short cuts of technical skill are wanting here. No matter how carefully the detail be wrought out, it is always subordinated to the thought and mass.

Ruskin classes Phidias with Giotto and Michael Angelo, and calls them the greatest architects of the world; and again, and with

especial pertinence here, in his remarks on "Repose" as a test of greatness in art, he says:

"We shall see by this light three colossal images standing up side by side, looming in their great rest of spirituality above the whole world-horizon, — Phidias, Michael Angelo, and Dante. These qualities could not have been produced by any direct will of the sculptor, no matter how he may have striven. They must have been a part of his environment."

We know, then, that Phidias moved readily and naturally in the best society in Athens, and made whatever ideas were uppermost in such society a part of himself, and therefore, of necessity, a part of his art.

"Awful is art, because 't is free;
The artist trembles o'er his plan
Where men his Self must see."

The great sculpture of Phidias gives us a most satisfactory knowledge of Athenian life at its highest. And Athenian life in her most advanced state of culture and refinement produces, naturally, a Phidias. Lowell speaks with a full and loving appreciation of this period of Greek art, when he says, —

"The Grecian gluts me with its perfectness,
Unanswerable as Euclid, self contained,
The one thing finished in this hasty world."

So much for this example. We have seen that to be a great artist in Greece was to be the equal of the greatest in the land. How different with the Roman, who affected all that the Greek naturally was. To practise the fine arts in early Rome was considered effeminate and trivial. The gross, sensual nature of the Romans could not well grasp the calm pleasure of pure form. Their sculptures are chiefly images of the Cæsars and their dissolute wives, and of the favorite court nobles. Their statues were manufactured often before they were needed, and heads were added to suit the reigning sovereign. Their portrait busts are modelled with a certain vigor and power that characterized all they did. The Roman was better suited to carry out vast architectural plans, to bridge over great rivers, to construct gigantic aqueducts and theatres, to build enduring roadways, than to create pure and beautiful forms. His nature lacked all the *finesse* of the Greek. His education was essentially different. In the Augustine age, it is true, Greek influence and letters, and the Greek sculpture which they had stolen, had done something to refine and uplift a nature

that was naturally coarse. But the love of art at its highest was an affectation rather than a sincerity. It was the fashion among the late Romans to affect a love for the fine arts.

Religion with them had become theatrical. They served their own selfish aims rather than the gods whom their fathers had worshipped in reality. The conditions of life and the ideas current were not such as to demand expression in great and enduring forms. There was no demand for creative genius, hence no creative genius arose. So much for the conditions of life that produce no distinguished artist. We need hardly attempt to show that the conditions of our life in America are very different.

Having considered the art, or lack of art, among the Romans, we may pass to the great period of the Italian Renaissance. We see, in studying this period, that the conditions of life in Italy then were much the same as in Athens in the days of her highest art. Indeed, there had been a great revival of classical learning in Florence, which led largely to the Renaissance movement. Men enjoyed personal freedom, and a love of the fine arts

became a passion with the Italians. After the long and deep darkness of the Middle Ages, man had awakened with new aspirations and new power in heart and brain. Whatever manifestation art took on, whatever was done in it, was done with a seriousness and a spiritual fervor that would, alone, make the period most interesting. The greatest sculptor of this school was unquestionably one of the greatest men of his time; a man of fine sensibilities, of complete and rounded education, of deep religious feeling and great poetic insight. This man was Michael Angelo. He practised many arts, but he believed sculpture to be his most natural vehicle for expressing thought and feeling. He considered it the most divine of all arts, and the most like nature, which "fashions all her works in high relief."

"This vast ball, the earth,
Was moulded out of clay, and baked in fire;
Men, women, and all animals that breathe
Are statues, and not paintings. Even the plants,
The flowers, the fruits, the grasses, were first
Sculptured, and colored later."

Michael Angelo himself said, —

"Sculpture is more than painting. It is greater
To raise the dead to life, than to create
Phantoms that seem to live."

His reverence for antique sculpture amounted almost to worship. He held himself an abashed and untutored schoolboy in its presence. To him the traditions of the past, the canons of art, were sacred. It was only after consummate study, pursued often far into the night, that he felt himself able to create. Work was his joy and recreation, and his art is the lesson of untiring industry. He was a man, as we know, who helped to form the political, social, and moral ideas of his time, more even than such ideas helped to mould him. His faith in God was unfaltering: let his Sibyls of the Sistine Chapel and his Moses testify to this. Of his love for man and belief in him his letters as well as his sculpture give us abundant proof. He was a man who mastered the problems of the time, and his art is essentially ideal art. To him the true was the ideal; he saw the typical beyond the accidental. It was this and this alone that he strove to embody. There were in his day, as now, realists enough, but their names are of no meaning to us; they passed away together with the literal facts from which they could not escape. To Michael Angelo belongs that —

"Divine insanity of noble minds
That never falters or abates,
But labors and endures and waits
Till all that it foresees it finds,
And what it cannot find, creates."

So we may leave the splendid period of the Italian Renaissance, and come to the modern era. The only school that is worth our consideration, from the standpoint of sculpture, is, at the beginning of this modern era, the school of France. No matter how we may criticise the *morale* of her art to-day, we must give her full and complete appreciation for the splendid initiative step she has taken.

In the Salon of this year (1892) was a group representing the Cyprian king, Pygmalion, in that ecstatic moment when his statue of Galatea is changed from ivory to actual life. It attracted a great deal of attention. The public was interested in it chiefly for two reasons, — first, because it was the plastic work of a painter who has been ranked among the first in France for the past twenty years; and, secondly, because the dramatic moment chosen by the sculptor was one in which the strongest feelings of man's nature are called into play. It was an opportunity to do a noble piece of

work. The royal artist, Pygmalion, having wrought long and carefully over his ivory figure, sees it actually transformed to life before his eyes. His prayer to the gods has been answered. Had such a subject been given to Phidias, or even to Praxiteles, what a glorious group might have come down to us! But the subject is suggested to an artist of a later day, in a country of advanced civilization, of remarkable ingenuity, and of vast resources. All these, we say, go toward the making of a great art; and with such a splendid thought, in the hands of a man who stood at the head of his country in art, was it not right to expect a result supremely beautiful? The artist had had every advantage of study in his own country and in foreign lands. There was only one thing lacking in the country that produced him, and in the man who represented her art. What this was, has been so sententiously and aptly put by our own poet, Sidney Lanier, that I shall quote his words as he wrote them:—

“Let any sculptor hew us out the most ravishing combination of tender curves and spheric softness that ever stood for woman; yet, if the lip have a cer-

tain fulness that hints of the flesh, if the brow be insincere, if in the minutest particular the physical beauty suggest a moral ugliness, that sculptor, unless he be portraying a moral ugliness for a moral purpose, may as well give over his marble for paving-stones. Time, whose judgments are inexorably moral, will not accept his work. For, indeed, we may say that he who has not yet perceived how artistic beauty and moral beauty are convergent lines which run back into a common ideal origin, and who, therefore, is not afire with moral beauty, just as with artistic beauty, — that he, in short, who has not come to that stage of quiet and eternal frenzy, in which the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty mean one thing, burn as one fire, shine as one light within him, he is not yet the great artist."

Had Sidney Lanier stood before this group, he could not have written a more pertinent criticism of it, or a more just one. The supreme moment in a sculptor's life is brought down to express merely the animal side of human love. A noble thought is debased. In the utter realism to which the sculptor has abandoned himself is found not one trace of ideal beauty. Had a Greek treated this subject, he would have made uppermost the unutterable joy that a creator feels in seeing

his work given that final touch which is beyond the hand of the greatest genius; a joy akin to that with which a mother looks upon her first child, and hears its cry. The legend tells us that many eminent critics had visited Pygmalion's studio, had looked upon his statue, and told him it all but lived. This breath of life is the one thing his wonderful creation lacked; when lo! entering his studio for a last look at his work, in the fading light of perhaps a day of hopeless endeavor, he hears a voice, soft, undulating, and distant, calling him by name. He looks about the studio and sees no one. Again he hears this soft, bird-like note calling to him. Something leads him to the niche which he had set apart for this darling expression of his highest thought. As he draws back the heavy curtain, his head swims and he clings convulsively for support to its heavy folds. The gods have wrought a miracle; his tireless prayers have been answered, and the one thing that his work lacked is given to it before his eyes. He sees the warm blood mount from the heart and flush into the rounded curve of the cheek. He sees the cold, ivory lips red with sweet new life;

and more than all else, the expression which he wrought upon for so many months is suddenly consummated, and the eyes look down upon him with inexpressible tenderness and gratitude; and the lips express, in the word, "Pygmalion," all that any woman could say to one who had called her from unconscious to conscious being. What are the feelings of a finely organized normal nature under such conditions? Would he not fall upon his knees, or upon his face, before the living statue? If he could express himself at all, would it not be in monosyllables, or in the expression of his own unworthiness? For the moment, surely he would not dare to touch a thing so fresh from the hands of the gods. No Greek could have done so. How, then, has this French sculptor treated the subject? He represents the man clinging madly on tiptoe to his living statue, and pressing upon her lips a kiss, that, from the expression upon his face, has in it not one trace of a man endowed with spiritual feeling.

I have dwelt for some length upon this creation, because it is a typical manifestation of the modern school of sculpture in France.

French sculpture deals too much with poetical legends, and thoughts that admit of, while they do not originally mean to convey, an obscene interpretation; or it is given over to the clever copying of some model, to which the sculptor affixes a title of his own, either to sell, or draw attention to his work, — a title which in no way belongs to the figure. As examples of this latter representation, one may instance the Dianas of M. Falguière, one of which is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Saint John of M. Bodin, in the Luxembourg gallery in Paris. These names belong in no respect to these statues; the former, as one may see, has no possible claim to the name of Diana, the chaste and exquisite goddess of the Greek, and the latter has certainly no characteristic by which we may recognize a Saint John prophesying in the wilderness the coming of a Saviour. The calling it a Saint John must have been the suggestion of one who knew little of that inspired character.

So much for this brief description of the main stream and tendency of much French sculpture. To this there are some notable exceptions, as for instance, the work of MM.

Barrias, Chapu, Thomas, and Dubois. The way a thing is told has come to mean more in France than the thing or idea itself. The Salon has bred a number of men who seek for cheap notoriety through the by-ways and artifices of technical skill, or by the depiction of some licentious subject. Better the dry, suffering, ascetic art of the monk, which has devotion and inspiration as its fountain head, than an art in which the expression dominates the thought.

Going back to the Salon of this year, as a showing of the last work done by the best known school of sculpture in the modern world, namely, that of France, there was one piece of work of vast importance by an American sculptor. It was placed quite at the other end of the hall, far away from the Pygmalion and Galatea which has been described. It was poorly placed and in a bad light. Many visitors did not see it at all. The work was in high relief, and was intended to be placed upon the tomb of a young sculptor. It consisted of two figures. A youth of noble mien and intelligent, quick sensibilities, stands before a design of a sphinx which he is cut-

ting in low relief from the background. His right arm is drawn back, the whole body braced; his left hand holds his chisel firmly, and his entire self is wrapt up in the bringing his thought out of that stubborn material. To the left, and but slightly removed from him, is a stately female figure, Greek in contour, but modern in feeling, representing Death. In her right hand is a spray of laurel; her left hand has been raised silently, and rests gently and regretfully, fatefully one may see, upon the point of the eager chisel. She would not stay that impetuous stroke, could she help it; but one reads in her face what she does not speak, — namely, that she is but the transmitter of a message of whose import she is unconscious, but that it is her duty to deliver it sealed. The head is half veiled. The sculptor has achieved in this work a thing after which many men have striven, — the happy blending, we may call it, of the antique feeling for form and proportion, — what in Greek art appeals to us most, and what we may term sculpturesque, — with a modern and, perhaps, Christian expression of character. This work has behind it a great poetic thought, and a

conscious, or unconscious, moral purpose. The sculptor's convictions were clear, and he expressed them firmly.

I am more glad than I can say, that our people have produced a work of this quality, and that America's conditions of life have been such as to develop a sculptor of this order. The man who created it was Mr. Daniel C. French. There is in it something that belongs, while it is cosmopolitan in a way, essentially to the Anglo-Saxon. There are one or two men in England who might have produced this work, but it belongs especially to the finer American. It is of such work that Lanier was thinking when he wrote thus to a young American artist:—

“Cannot one say with authority to the young artist, whether working in stone, in color, in tones, or in character-forms of the novel, so far from dreading that your moral purpose will interfere with your beautiful creation, go forward in the clear conviction that unless you are suffused—soul and body, one might say—with that moral purpose which finds its largest expression in love, that is, the love of all things in their proper relation; unless you are suffused with this love, do not dare to meddle with beauty; unless you are suffused with beauty, do not dare to

meddle with love ; unless you are suffused with truth, do not dare to meddle with goodness ; in a word, unless you are suffused with truth, wisdom, goodness, and love, abandon the hope that the ages will accept you as an artist."

If the conditions of our national life have been such as to produce one example, — and I could instance other works of art of this order and merit by Americans, — the outlook for American sculpture is certainly most auspicious. But there are certain things in our educational institutions that need careful thought and sagacious handling. Every young artist or lover of the fine arts should be taught, and made to understand, that a great national art is possible only with a great national life. He must be shown, through history and experience, that art is the plastic manifestation of the ideas that are current when such art is produced. Let him fill himself with the lovely art of Greece in her best periods, and then make himself familiar with the conditions of Hellenic life that produced such art. Let him see that it was inevitable and that our art is not yet sufficiently inevitable. We are striving still to express great ideas and thoughts

that are not generally accepted. Let him learn that he must do his share in the propagating of such great ideas, if he is to make a great art era for America possible.

Art is still, as it always has been, largely a question of supply and demand. Let the demand be for art of a spiritual and enduring beauty, and the supply will not fail. Let the student take to heart also the thought that art is not invention, but subject to the laws of evolution, as is science; and let him put away at once and forever the foolish idea that science and mechanics are at war with art. Indeed, we may safely say that great art is impossible without great science. The hand that executed, and the brain that devised, the Parthenon at Athens were the hand of a completely trained artisan and the brain of a man who was master of the science of his own day and of the ages that had preceded him. Going back still further, to the great days of Egypt under the Memphian dynasty, we see that the sculptor and architects who planned and placed the wonderful pyramids and sphinx, —

“ With eyes that see on and far
Unto the lights of the great Past, new-lit
Fair for the Future's track,”



were men trained in a school of engineering superior to our own. I have been told by an explorer that in the great ruins he had visited, the immense blocks of granite were so nicely put together that he could not thrust a needle point between the cracks.

Coming down to the Italian Renaissance, we find that Michael Angelo and Lionardo not only knew their own particular art, and its sister arts, but were in the possession of the best scientific knowledge of their day. They were called upon to plan fortifications, and to throw up the defences of a city, as well as to paint sublime frescoes, and to cut enduring thoughts and ideas in stone. From these ages and men, the artist, old or young, must learn the vital lesson of a rounded development, and this comes only with great reverence for the past.

Having seen that science is not at war with, but positively friendly to and necessary for, the production of great art, let our artists move along the lines of established principles, taking all that is worthy from the past; and with the same reverence that all great men have shown for Greek art, we shall be able, if we are worthy, to create something lasting.

It is only when we know what has gone before, that we are able to give some new manifestation in art, growing out of the leading ideas and aspirations of our people. It is creation and not invention that belongs to art.

Institutions that teach the fine arts must not only embrace complete technical departments, but must throw open to the students lectures upon history, archæology, science, and literature, and a special course in the province of criticism. Might not such institutions have a department for the training of men to criticise the fine arts intelligently and sympathetically? There are men in our own city who are capable of criticising a statue from an intellectual standpoint, but who lack altogether that sympathetic grasp of the artist's plastic thought which should characterize a man who makes criticism his vocation. One needs to have the sensuous nature developed, as well as the intellectual. Nothing would help more to realize this than the study of poetry. One would rather have had Keats to criticise a statue, or our own poet, Lanier, than the most learned of men. Then, too, students should be taught what is bad art, as

well as what is good art. Indeed, I have thought, at times, that it would be well to preserve in museums the statues of bad men of our day and time, as well as representations of noble men; for on no paper is written so plainly the history of crime and vice as it is written upon the human face. What commentary more essentially truthful than the sculptor's art? Look at the busts of Nero, for example, in the Capitoline Museum, in Rome. In early life the face is fine, frank, and promising. Study its gradual debasement until you see the spirit of the man utterly eliminated. It is a history that one can follow without knowing how to read, and it is a history as lasting as bronze.

A child must, then, learn to distinguish between good and bad art, to learn what ideas are worthy and capable of being represented in sculpture. He must be made to see the limitations of this art, and to understand its principles. Past schools of art should be carefully followed; their rise, the period of their highest achievements, and their decadence; and all this should be illustrated by casts from such fragments as remain to us of such schools.

Would it not be well if the children of the public schools, as well as of the art-academies, could be taken once a week, at least, to the art-museum to hear interesting lectures upon the sculptures, as they stand face to face with them? The work recently inaugurated by the Public School Art League is a long step in the right direction. Taste does not come of itself. The power of selection should be dwelt upon as all-important, and the study of composition, so little thought of to-day in schools of art. Indeed, education must be of an order to develop a child harmoniously, and then, even if he do not pursue the fine arts as a calling, a love of the beautiful will be a saving grace in his nature.

The study of sculpture teaches, if anything, the lesson of moderation. Balance and self-poise are necessary to one who would either practise or understand sculpture. Above all, should not a student learn that art is so much a part of life that it cannot be separated from it; that the great men of all time, who have produced great art, have been great in themselves? Emerson has said, —

“Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought.”

What is needed most in America, perhaps, is a quickening of the spiritual life; then art will follow naturally. 'T is the spiritual significance of a work of art that we must look for; this is as utterly opposed to the sickly sentimental as to the purely materialistic. Perhaps the best way of attaining this is through the study of poetry. There is little danger of our people's having too much poetry; too few of us feel with Keats that, "the poetry of earth is never dead." The trend of our life sets too steadily toward the prosaic and practical. We are taught that a practical sense is not compatible with a love of poetry and ideal beauty. Is not this an error? Have not the great spiritual ideas of the world been ultimately the most practical? The love of art is distinctly spiritualizing. We have need of poetic thought to express the masterly ideas of our civilization, its freedom, its generous humanity, and its democratic simplicity. Nor can we hammer away too much upon the idea of historic reverence.

There is a sad inclination now, visible in architecture and in music, perhaps, more than in painting and in sculpture, to endeavor to

produce some startling effect by a mingling of many styles into one building or oratorio. We must inculcate a love for style. What a pity that there has not been a more general following of a style of architecture, for example, to which Richardson gave such a splendid impetus! Daniel French, St. Gaudens, Warner, and, before them, Thomas Ball, have given us new standards for an American school of sculpture. Let us follow and develop this splendid leading. When our artists and our public are moving along the lines of spiritual and poetic thought, where great ideas alone flourish, then shall we have creations and embodiments of beauty, power, and truth, of which we now hardly dream. Our civilization must learn the lesson of spiritual freedom, the freedom of self-control. We shall learn then how best to dispose of the immense wealth we are accumulating. Throughout our country has sprung up a generous emulation among wealthy men to endow and build educational institutions; but these are often hampered seriously by the conditions imposed by the generous but perhaps not far-seeing donor. Let such men learn to place their wealth in

the hands of those who understand education. It is a science, and needs as much study as the art of accumulating material fortunes.

It is the imaginative faculty, then, that we must seek to develop in our people. There are few men without ideals; indeed, the poets, who know life, tell us that every man has within himself a pure ideal or aspiration. Then let us do all we can in our city and in our country to develop and provide for an artist, when we find one. Let not the good seed of genius fall on sterile ground. Let us not cross the seas to buy works of foreign masters, when the same money here will produce a master. In other words, let us have a disinterested love of art. Many fine pictures and statues fall into the hands of wealthy men; and they hold them much as they hold their fast horses. They are put away where the public cannot see them, and the owner boasts of the fact that he possesses the original.

If art is worthy and beautiful, it belongs to the people as much as does freedom. Let us do honor, then, to those men who, setting aside selfish desires, will buy a picture or statue and present it to a museum, where it may be

seen by all, and where all may be benefited by it. The giving that gives itself, its own love, is the only giving worth having.

The moral temperature, as Taine would call it, is ripe for a great art with us. Our wars are over, at least it would seem so for the present, and the keen appreciation which the American people feel for those who fought and died to preserve the Union and to establish universal freedom has given birth to an earnest desire to commemorate in some lasting form the heroic services rendered. In no country in the civilized world are so many monuments projected as here in America. Money is freely given for this purpose, both by the government and by private individuals. The only thing lacking seems to be a proper discrimination as to who shall be chosen to build such monuments and where they shall be erected; yet even this want is being provided for, and Boston has the honor of taking the initiative and establishing an Art Commission. When public taste has been sufficiently developed, there will naturally be little need of such censorship. When our educational systems have been so modified and developed as

to provide for proper and rounded artistic education in school and college, this matter will need no further remedy.

The age and, more directly, our own people are concerned in the study of truth and character. There is a wide-spread desire to know the essential worth and count of a man, as well as the amount of his material possessions. This spiritual desire is a most favorable sign for art, and especially for sculpture. The age is seeking for the very thing that it is the distinctive province of sculpture to furnish. History shows that a love for the sculpturesque—I speak not of rude carving or imitation, but of pure form—comes last in the history of development. Color is with us from our infancy; but the love of form, in the individual as well as the nation, grows only with spiritual life. The study, during the past century, of man's mental characteristics and their highest possible attainment has led us unconsciously to the point where we are to study and understand better the development of the spiritual.

We have shown, then, that our people are ready for their great sculptor; that the con-

ditions of life with us are in the main those necessary to the production of a great art. Along with this spiritual desire has sprung up a love for perfect physical development. Athletics, to-day, are as much a part of our school and university life (whether ostensibly included in the curriculum or no) as they were in the palmy days of Greece. A sound mind in a sound body is an axiom known to every young American, and our healthful return to out-of-door exercise and games, and to suburban living, is bound to produce a finely developed race of men and women. We are learning to look upon the nude form in the way that Greece regarded it, — namely, as the highest possible embodiment of a man's conception of and love for ideal beauty, veritably the temple of the spirit. Together with that sickly-sentimental literature of the cheap news-stand is passing away that pseudo-sentimental idea, engendered by a prudish and false modesty, that the nude figure is indecent. When we learn that to have a beautiful and finely developed form requires moderation in life and subjection to the spiritual, then shall we know that the nude form is as pure as God made it.

One thinks, with great pity, of the poet Heine, dragging himself with effort and pain through the courts of the Louvre, along the corridor and into the room where the statue of the Venus of Melos is placed. To him it was the embodiment of a sublime morality, which he, in his innermost self, aspired to, but failed to realize. No art has so contributed to the highest enjoyment and calm intellectual satisfaction, no art has so well realized man's aspirations for absolute and calm beauty, as this great and benignant art of sculpture. From it poets have drawn their most exalted images; upon it they have built their choicest expressions. It has been from the first a saving grace to man; its power to ennoble and dignify and exalt is unbounded. It is the central and most complete development that human life has ever taken on. No one has ever dared to attribute to it an impure or unworthy object. Where carving has had an unworthy or ignoble office, it has from its very purpose and nature placed itself without the domain of the sculptural, and such effort cannot legitimately be called sculpture. It is all and more than poets boast of it: the

calmest and simplest of all the arts, the most moderate, the most holy, the most exalting, and the most enduring of man's efforts to place human life upon the plane which God originally intended it to occupy. More than all word of teacher does it spontaneously show man's body to be the lovely possession of an immortal and beautiful spirit. Well does Michael Angelo, who knew it as well as any who has ever lived, speak of it as, —

“All that embellishes and sweetens life
And lifts it from the level of low cares
Into the purer atmosphere of beauty.”

MANHOOD IN ART

I AM not, under this title of "Manhood in Art," to write an essay on those famous pictures and sculptures of the world which have set forth the idea of manhood. Yet even if the reader were to interpret my title in this way, he would not go far astray. Any painting or sculpture which has given the world a noble, symbolical idea of true manhood speaks to us of the manhood which called it into being. A man can produce only what he is. Men do not gather figs of thistles.

There is a curious hue and cry to-day among artists and art critics, about "art for art's sake." What do men mean by this? I may be pardoned if I say that I do not believe that a quarter of these criers know themselves what they mean. It is one of those catch-phrases that we take as we do a cold, half unconsciously, and which makes us wretched. The great men of all time have wrought their art

for God's sake and for the saving grace which it brings to humanity. Keats said, "Beauty for truth's sake." He meant the same thing. That was a sublime saying of Epictetus, "Wretch, thou carriest about a God with thee, and knowst it not." Is it not the high office of art to reveal to every human being the God within, from the contemplation of the God without?

It was that sensitive apostle of the inner life, Amiel, who wrote one day in his diary: "Every landscape is to me, as it were, a state of the soul." Let us have no more jugglery with words, but let us speak plainly and openly, and say that we love and practise art because it reveals to us, in every face and form and in the universe, the divine spirit. It leads us a little closer to that spirit.

My subject, from which I have already wandered a little, is tempting, and must lead me, I fear, as May days do, into by-ways and hedges; but if I return with some sweet wild flower, my wandering may not be lamented. What a fallacy it is to think that life to-day calls for less heroic effort and sacrifice than the years from 1861 to 1865! Those years did indeed

try men's souls, but not more so than the present hour, provided men are tuned to its problems and pledged to their solution. And how are we to solve these terrible social problems? The artist may say that he has nothing to do with such problems. Then surely he can have nothing to do with the great art of his time. The great artists of all ages have been men who understood their own epoch. It is only the petty artist who reflects the base and frivolous side of the age in which he lives, as it is the penny-a-liner who reflects the ignoble and frivolous phase of its literature.

There have been examples of men who have done good work in art, without having caught the spirit of their times, — the "Zeitgeist," as the Germans call it. Notable among those was Canova. There is something pitiful about his talent, to me, in spite of Byron's high-sounding praises. Byron was not sufficiently real, not true enough, essentially, to distinguish pseudo-art from the genuine inspiration. Have you ever seen one of the figures of Canova placed beside a statue from the hand of Praxiteles? Have you ever placed "Childe Harold," fine as it is, beside Wordsworth's "Ode to

Immortality," or the "Ode to a Grecian Urn," by Keats, or Shelley's "Adonais"?

The history of great art is the history of great lives. Given a statue or picture, and one may determine at once what kind of a man it was who produced it. This is a scientific fact, as true as that, given a bone, the scientist can reproduce the entire anatomy of an animal extinct ages ago. Is not this a tremendous fact, one that ought to make us tremble for our creations and for ourselves?

"Our thoughts are moulding unseen spheres
And, like a blessing or a curse,
They thunder down the formless years,
And ring throughout the universe."

It is from France that the saying has come, "Separate art from religion." To do this, you must separate art from itself. Can a dismembered art be great? Our earliest American sculptors followed the blind leading of blind men, — Thorwaldsen, Canova, and his school. It was their thought to live as it were apart from the great suffering world. We have already begun, alas! to take down the monuments which they expected to endure throughout time. There are sculptors in America

now who live with America as well as in it. It takes courage to do this; but it would not be worthy our manhood if it did not. If we are to have a great art, however, we must not give our students over to teachers who, while versed in all past arts, are ignorant of the present and blind to it. How can men help us if they do not know us? Help means sympathy, and sympathy means love. The love of many of our teachers for us and for this great noble country is but a fancy rather than a fact. It was not so with Lowell and Emerson.

Men die of broken hearts to-day as they have from the beginning. They die because they cannot express themselves. They have in their hearts a song to sing. It may be a color-song, or a time-song, no matter what. They have this message to deliver to their fellow-men; but those whom we appoint as censors of our art tell us that their song is not worth listening to. How do they know their song is not worth listening to? They are so buried in the dead past, in old prints and harpsichords and Gothic figures, that they would not hear the trumpet of Gabriel. Oh for a Victor

Hugo, to put before us a new "Hernani," and drive the mummies from the boards!

That was an eventful scene upon the stage of the Théâtre Français in 1829. From that hour reality triumphed over the conventional false classicism, which hung like a wet rag about every new inspiration. When the two forces of the past and present are pitted against each other, who would not like to come into one of the stalls with a flaming red vest, as Gautier did at the production of "Hernani," and shock the Philistines, till the slow blood is made to flow once more through their dry veins? Let us speak with no lack of reverence for what is sacred in the past; but the living present is rich with manly deeds. We are, I believe, on the threshold of the greatest art the world has ever known. Are we not the heirs of all the ages? Is not this life and art, with which we now stand face to face, the consummation of all art and all living? Swinburne says somewhere, "Unto each man his handiwork, unto each his crown, the just fate gives;" and some one has well said that we have a right to the expression of every human soul. Let us stand out for this right. Let us

respect the potentiality in every human being to express something. It is for this, I take it, that America was called into existence. Let no past fetter us. The veriest wretch who feeds some benumbing piece of machinery in the noisy room of a manufacturing town has something to give the world. It may be only that drop of his hopeless prison-experience; but no matter what it is, there are two rights which must be served before we can be spiritually free or actually just. The one right is that of every individual to express himself, and the other right is the world's claim to that expression. Little did men dream, two thousand years ago, that the poor, wretched, crippled slave, Epictetus, had something to say of greater import than all the patricians in the land. We have not yet done with slavery; we have only advanced a plane higher in the scale of civilized living.

Shall we not find out what manliness in art means, if we can discover what it is in life? The young artist must be made to feel that he has within him that which is sacred and precious, worth striving to develop with that high faith that belongs to youth and proph-

ets. To be a genius requires not only divine patience, but daring. No critic could shut off Shakespeare. We know that the critics of his time criticised him caustically; but he had a song to sing, and he dared to sing it, although he doubtless knew that his technique was imperfect and his knowledge limited. It took faith to launch those argosies of song. Through faith and courage, England found an articulate voice in her peasant lad.

From Shakespeare my mind passes—strangely it may seem, but really not inaptly—to our own Gen. Ulysses Grant. He had something to tell the world, and with a courage that should be an inspiration to every living man he held disease and death back until his thought had found complete expression. So it has been with great men always. Mrs. Browning has put the thought in a most definitive way in her sonnet:—

“ With stammering lips and insufficient sound,
I strive and struggle to deliver right
The music of my nature, day and night
With dream and thought and feeling interwound,
And inly answering all the senses round
With octaves of a mystic depth and height,
Which step out grandly to the infinite
From the dark edges of the sensual ground.

This song of songs I struggle to outbear
Through portals of the sense, sublime and whole,
And utter all myself unto the air ;
But if I did it, — as the thunder-roll
Breaks its own cloud, — my flesh will perish there
Before that dread apocalypse of soul."

So wrote the greatest woman poet who has lived since the days of Sappho. Let us dwell for a moment on the thought of this sonnet; for it bears directly on our subject. It expresses that struggle which every artist feels, when he attempts to deliver aright the music of his nature. The world imagines that his music is given without effort, as the lark sings. But as the lark soars into the deep blue of heaven and sings, is he not making his utmost effort to rise above all earthly things? It is so likewise with the artist. Let us have done with the idea that genius gives birth to its creations without labor. Rather is it born, this statue or symphony, with an agony that brings drops of sweat from the brow.

This thought of the labor of creation brings us to another element which goes to the making up of manhood in art, — namely, the element of sacrifice. This is the very soul of the subject. Sacrifice, with patience and daring, makes the

trinity complete. Some one has said that it is the province of science to minister to the body, while art appeals directly to the soul. Yet the eyes of sense and the eye of reason in a man work in wondrous harmony. Browning has even dared to say, "Not a soul helps sense the more than sense helps soul." But in the greatest art the soul dominates the sense. The color must not be so aggressive that it conceals the artist's fine intention. Equipoise is needed. Indeed the first thing that speaks to us in a great work of art is its harmony, and harmony implies proportion and symmetry. Harmony is not born with us, but is the result of intelligent living. The true artist is one who recognizes the perfect harmony of the universe, and compels, in his own nature and its expression, a kindred harmony.

The American people have been almost inclined to look upon the artist as a "crank," or a man who is only half balanced. This is a curious misapprehension. Genius is not insanity, as some foolishly claim. The men who have given us greater insight into the beauty of the two worlds, the natural and the spiritual, have been men who were not less but

more sane than their fellows. Longfellow, indeed, has called this harmonious seeing a divine insanity, as he says in "Keramos":—

"The exultation, the divine
Insanity of noble minds,
That never falters or abates,
But labors and endures and waits,
Till all that it foresees it finds,
Or what it cannot find creates."

I have proven, I hope, without direct intention of doing so, that the great artist is a roundly developed man. To be this implies a rounded order of living, and that the artist must be surrounded by men of culture and great heart, magnanimous men. Why are men forever disputing about art, as to what it is and what it is not? The great minds of the world have defined it for us in plain and unmistakable language; it is only those who hang about its skirts, never reaching its soul, who seem mystified. The great inspired artist has always felt his genius to be a vehicle for a clearer interpretation or expression of the divine beauty in the universe.

The greater the artist, the more willing has he been to attribute the glory to God. No great art has come into existence by means of

a fraud. Great art as well as great artists are wholly sincere. What is it that makes Millet's peasant different from the thousand imitations of him that have sprung up on every side? One is fact, the other is fancy. The tender, earnest, religious nature of the great French painter loved and understood the meagre, overworked, starved life of this marvellously patient class. Did he not go down and talk and live with them, and learn every phase of their existence? Through love for them he came into closer sympathy with them than any other man. Not even Victor Hugo has done so much for them as Millet; he has written their history in a way that can never be mistaken or forgotten. He has told their wrongs, the long-suffering patience they have exhibited, better than any man of his time. Truly, as Henry Drummond says, "Love is the greatest thing in the world."

Art, then, is nature passed through the crucible of man's sympathetic intelligence; and great art is nature passed through the intelligence of a great man. It is this to-day; it was this twenty-five hundred years ago in Greece. You know the great artist and the

great poet by his choice of subject. It may be the whole expanse of heaven, as Michael Angelo saw it; or it may be in the setting forth the homely beauty of a little field-flower, as Burns has done it. You know it by its genuineness.

“Illusion underneath there lies
The common life of every day;
Only the spirit glorifies,
With its own tints, the sober gray.”

We cannot have too great a respect or too much admiration for great works of art and the great men who have produced them, nor can we care too tenderly for the children and the young men who have the seeds of this larger inspiration sown in their hearts. The time is not far distant in this country, when the State will be compelled, by a consensus of public opinion, to endow and protect its geniuses. The artistic nature has in itself difficulties enough to overcome, enough of passion and impulse to be subdued, without having to contend in the arena of commercial life for the bare necessities of existence. There must be leisure for the working-out of the great thought. Our cities, with all their intellectual

activity, are still far behind the great cities of the Old World in a genuine appreciation of art,

Manliness in art, if it means anything, means a steady determination to endure the inevitable hardships that attend any great effort. It means the shutting out from one's life of many alluring pleasures. The moment an artist gives himself over to the benumbing pleasure of sense, that moment he ceases to be a great artist, because he ceases to govern himself. Intelligence has become subordinate to its servant, passion. He is no longer an orderly being. Not only the intellectual and physical being begins to decay, but the spiritual insight into nature is confused, and soon languishes; and this insight, as I have endeavored to show, is the artist's supreme vehicle and loftiest attainment. The spiritual man has a grasp upon the universe that Napoleon, with his armies and his train of kings, failed utterly to possess. The world cannot give a man this, he must win it. Like heaven, it is a result, not a reward. A man may possess it in the humblest walks of life; he may be ostensibly a slave, and yet, like Epictetus, one

of the kings of thought. A man may also possess this genius and live in a palace, like Marcus Aurelius, surrounded by fawning courtiers, with an empire at his feet, and it keeps him unspotted from the world.

It is one of the most flagrant wrongs and errors of the day, this idea that an artist is a child of the senses, or that he must abandon himself to them to attain success. France is falling into decadence because her virility is cankered at the heart through such abandonment. Turn from the perfervid, sensual art of the Paris Salon, to the lovely and temperate art of Greece. It is like turning from the gaudy faces and bedizened appearance of the women who haunt the London streets at night, to the pure and innocent faces of the primitive virgins. Dear God! save us from a like decadence. The most tragic thought in all such falling away is that the decline is seldom seen or realized by the nation or individual which suffers it. If it be true, indeed, that to the pure all things are pure, is it not also true that to the impure all things are impure? We must set aside, at once and forever, this fallacy that from an impure nature can be born

some noble, enduring art-product. Just as surely as the child bears the instinct and taint of its parent, so surely does the picture or the statue reveal the blemish or the glory of its creator. No amount of jugglery or sleight of hand will bring sweet roses from an unwholesome weed. Natural law holds in the spiritual world of art.

We hear it said to-day that there is little left for us to do in art. Are there no stars left in heaven that men have not fixed and counted with their searching lenses?

“Who shall call his dream fallacious,
Who has searched and sought
All the vast and unimagined
Universe of thought?”

Are there not ten thousand times greater opportunities in art to-day than there have been since the beginning of things? Do we not stand in the magnificent result of an evolution so extensive that the mind can hardly grasp it? Is not the world ours, and all its unspeakable treasures? Men go down to the depths of the ocean and bring back to us its wondrous flora; travellers to the heart of Africa bring back sights and sounds that astound us.

Above and beyond this are not the unspeakable dreams and realities of the spiritual world opening out to us each hour? Nothing left to us. The man who does not find modern life picturesque, either does not know it, or has not the picturesque within him; it is left out of his composition just as some men are born crippled.

Are not the faces of our American people interesting? Do you not see in them the working out of the great social problems of the race? Is the human heart here, its love, its passion, its hate, its ambition, and its aspiration, different from the heart of Egypt, of Assyria, and Greece?

Have we not won for art a new and splendid domain in the school of landscape painting? And as to sculpture, is it true that there is no reason for its being in this practical and mechanical age? Have not the ages which have been mechanical and practical produced great and enduring arts? Is there not left for us the most sublime and consummate achievement of which man is capable, namely, the depiction of character, the writing of life upon the human face? Christianity has fur-

nished us with a motive which even Greece in her palmiest days hardly dared aspire to. The fault is not with modern life, but with the way we look at it. The artist's calling must be looked upon with more seriousness. He is as much your minister as he who interprets your Bible to you. He reads to you from the book of nature. The Japanese, in their great days of art, considered their artists prophets, feeling it a privilege to minister to their wants, and were overjoyed if, after having entertained a travelling artist, he left to their town or village some small piece of his handiwork, to be cherished and handed down as a sacred heirloom.

What artists want to-day is not adulation, not airy flatteries. They need sincere and genuine sympathy. Only through this sympathetic appreciation, this entering into the artist's thought and inspiration and sacrifice, can he and his work be understood. Such love and appreciation will inspire the artist to a higher accomplishment than men yet dream of. The artist does not ask much from the world. A moderate living suffices for him. If you give him of your very best, it is not too

much; for does he not reveal to you that which makes your life worth the living? Let our critics, those who understand what true criticism means (there is perhaps a more painful lack of great critics than great artists), come out of the dead past and try, through loving their fellow-men better, to understand better the living present and its possibilities. Let us have more earnest criticism. To criticise a thing means to understand it, not to stand outside and throw stones. I had rather be a dog and bay the moon, than stand and bay a work of art I had not soul enough to understand. Criticism is left to-day, often, to silly men and women of meagre education, with little sagacity and little sympathy. To be a true critic, a man must, first of all, be magnanimous; and this means culture and refinement, balance, and the temperance which comes only after much wise seeing and thinking. How many men, of those who affect to criticise public statues, know what the qualities are in a work of art which make it monumental or trivial? Have they studied the great art-periods of Egypt, Greece, and Italy? Have they travelled and seen what statues



and monuments are left to us from antiquity? Have they read what Winckelmann, Lessing, Ruskin, and the poets have said of great statues and of art? Are they fitted to criticise sympathetically and intelligently a work of art? If not, why do they speak at all? It was of such that Michael Angelo said, "Every ass thinks himself a stag until he comes to jump the brook."

We need to have more reverence and respect for the artist's calling. What do men labor for, from morning to evening? Is it for a mere shelter, and for food to satisfy the cravings of their bodies? Is it not rather that they may attain to a position where they may surround themselves with beautiful things. All the wealth in the world will not buy such objects, unless we care for the men who create them. Every university that pretends to teach art should have a complete collection of casts of antique and modern models, that a man may grasp the central truths of art with his sense as with his intellect. In our modern life we know that the intellect dominates the heart; but we cannot have a great art until intellect and heart work together.

I have spoken of the conditions of life and the social state most congenial to the development of genius in art. Enough has been said to exhibit clearly the fact that manhood in art means a manly tone in society, which art reflects. We know that many imperfect blossoms fell to the ground and were tossed about and destroyed by the whirlwind of ignorance, superstition, and selfishness, before the perfect flower of Italian art bloomed into such unspeakable loveliness. It takes many an imperfect man to make a perfect one; and many crude artists go on before, as pioneers, to clear the way for the master-spirits. Before we had Fra Bartolommeo, Michael Angelo, and Raphael, it was necessary to have Masaccio and his noble contemporaries.

“He came to Florence long ago,
And painted here those walls, that shone
For Raphael and for Angelo
With secrets deeper than his own.”

Shakespeare was the result of an age when culture was so common that every gentleman could turn his quatrains or play some sweet-sounding instrument. There is nothing wonderful about Shakespeare or Dante when one

has once entered into the spirit of their epochs and understands them. Genius is a result. Let those who lament what seems to them the barren soil of modern art see to it that the soil be properly prepared, so that the good seed fall not on stony ground. If we have one cardinal sin as a people, it is a disintegrating flippancy, which we ought to abhor. Our comic papers and our wits do not direct their ridicule and satire wisely, — sometimes, indeed, simply indecently, and in a cowardly spirit unworthy of men. If we wish to keep our national life and our home-life pure and high-toned, let us see that our ridicule is not directed against holy things. It has become a fashion to sneer at the “old masters.” If the men who sneer at them should attempt to handle their tools, it would be like Sancho Panza attempting to wield the lance of Bayard. As we press forward bravely to the future, let it be with a feeling of reverence for those noble spirits who have made this great present possible. Let us cling to all that is worthy in the past, while we do not let it prison us.

“Thoughts that great hearts once broke for, we
Breathe cheaply in the common air.”

The criticism is often made regarding the artist that he is a narrow, one-sided being, impetuous, indiscreet, irritable, melancholy, and vain. Much of such criticism comes from the Philistines, — men who, lost in the commercial round, would let die out of their lives, as they are dying in their hearts, "glory and genius and joy." Huxley has said, "Genius, to my mind, means innate capacity of any kind above the average mental level." It must certainly be acknowledged that the real artist is a being richly endowed. He holds within himself powers and possibilities beyond the reach of common men. But without appreciation and love, he dies. "Orchids do not grow among wayside stones." He may tend sheep as Giotto did on the hills of Tuscany, or he may be born of a noble race, like Angelo, and have easy access to courts throughout his life. Giotto needed the sympathy and love of his master, Cimabue, to develop his versatile genius, and, later, the love and friendship of Dante, to round out and perfect that genius. Angelo needed, first, the careful influence of his master, Ghirlandaio, then the interest and kindness of Lorenzo the Magnifi-

cent, and, lastly, the devotion of his servant Urbino and the admiration of Vittoria Colonna, before his mighty genius could find expression. Genius must find sympathetic appreciation or it cannot live, any more than a flower can live without sunlight.

The most precious characteristic of true genius, and the surest sign by which we can recognize it, is a capacity for indefinite *expansion*. Many men pose as artists to-day who have no right to that appellation. The tendency of modern life has been to force men into narrowing grooves. The artist, alas! has often succumbed to the strain and pressure of existence as other men have. He has fallen into looking at life through the wrong end of the field-glass. Our artists are not big enough *men*; first man and then artist! Fame is won for painting fabrics and making dots of color like the actual stuff. One becomes known for the brilliant way in which he handles sunlight; another I have heard of in New York has won fame for painting eyes that look down. Is art a matter of paint and bristles, or is it the expression of a man's highest understanding of the universe? Have you heard Sarasate

play the violin? His reputation has not been won by painting eyes that look down, — rather for painting eyes that look up. The artist to-day is too much the slave of his palette and the latest sensation of the Paris school.

The claim of certain literary men that artists are often narrow men is half true. The training of an artist is not yet understood in this country, and only dimly realized abroad. Instead of wondering how Shakespeare and Giotto and Donatello managed to do such perfect work with such poor schooling, we had better look more closely into the conditions of life which rounded out such men, and then attempt to make our schools correspond to those conditions. We cannot have a great art until art education is more generally taught in the public schools. What the clear-eyed Greek thought to be the most essential thing in the educational plan, we relegate to the last place. Art is a thing that must grow with a child's life; it can seldom be engrafted in later years. Our whole system of education is wrong in this respect. A child will knock out reading and writing from almost any environment in which he may be placed; but a love and taste

for the beautiful come only through association with beautiful things. Let the starved natures of the children in our great city schools learn to know that outside those brick walls there is a world of surpassing loveliness. This they will learn through seeing beautiful pictures and beautiful statuary. Let them hear not only the droning voice of the teacher, but the music of the violin and the human voice in song. So will you give them something to think about besides their books, and so will they begin slowly to take their places in the eternal harmony of the universe. Place round the school-room beautiful statues, that children may learn to respect and care for their bodies as the veritable temples of the immortal soul. This kind of religion they will not fly from; it will be a saving grace to them in after years. From seeing Greek sculpture they will wish to know something about Greek life, and from this they cannot fail to catch that lesson of temperance which will hallow all thereafter. From such contemplation will come something calm and holy to stand by them through the tempests of after years. And, lastly, write upon the walls the living words of our great

poets, Longfellow, Lowell, Emerson, Whittier, and all those who have striven to uplift and dignify human life. So they will go about among our great cities as did Hermes Trismegistus in the streets of Thebes, —

“In the thoroughfare
Breathing as if consecrated,
A diviner air.
And amid discordant noises,
Of the jostling throng,
Hearing afar celestial voices
Of Olympian song.”

This is the true education that we are longing for and striving for. No false cry of economy can keep it from us. This is the order of education that will produce great artists and a great order of manly living.

THE RELATION OF THE DRAMA TO EDUCATION

IN this essay I purpose (1) to examine the relation of the dramatic, as such, to education in its essential nature; (2) to consider the drama as it exists at present, especially in our own country, in its relation to the purely dramatic and to education, pointing out its more salient defects and shortcomings; and (3) to suggest means whereby these defects and shortcomings may be remedied, and the drama raised to a position from which it may exercise its legitimate function as a factor in education.

An important step toward the accomplishment of the first of these purposes — namely, the defining of the relation of the dramatic to education — will be taken if we can make clear the meaning of the terms in which our subject is couched.

Education (from *e-duco*), at bottom, means a leading or drawing out of the faculties of the human being. To this etymological definition,

usage, guided by experience, has added something more, so that education means the harmonious drawing out of all the human faculties with a view to perfect intelligence, perfect nobility of feeling, and perfect moral action, guided by intelligence and feeling. Furthermore, education, in ordinary speech, is used sometimes in a narrower, sometimes in a broader sense. In the former, it means that instruction which is given in schools, colleges, and universities; in the latter, it embraces all the influences that shape our characters from the cradle to the grave. I purpose to use the term in both senses, but mainly in the latter; for true it is that "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

Passing now to the other term, *drama*, we find ourselves again guided, in some degree, to its meaning by its etymology. *Drama* (from *drao*, to act) literally signifies action; but to this meaning, also, usage has added something more, so that *drama* has come to mean the representation in the form of action of a moral problem, or collision, in such a way that the motives for the whole series of events are clearly revealed, and all fortuitous circumstances, which in actual

life serve to complicate such problems and to conceal their import, are excluded.

Having thus defined the terms *education* and *drama*, we may now put our subject in the form of a question, and substitute for these terms their definitions. The problem will then assume something like this form: What effect will the presentation of a moral collision in the form of a motivated action, displaying the whole round of its natural consequences and excluding all fortuitous circumstances, have in harmoniously drawing out the faculties of the human being, so as to insure perfect intelligence, nobility of feeling, and moral action? Plainly, unless we can show that the dramatic presentation of moral problems has some peculiar advantages, either in the way of clearness or impressiveness, we shall be unable to claim for it a distinctive place in a system of education. This, however, seems by no means difficult. It is a time-honored adage, confirmed by the experience of centuries, that example is more powerful than precept, and what is the dramatic representation of a moral problem other than teaching by example? It may be objected that examples sufficient for this purpose are to be found in

actual life, and that, therefore, the drama is superfluous. Unfortunately, however, actual life is not under our control, and hence we cannot command such examples either at the time, or in the form, or in the number in which we require them. But even granting that we could to some extent command such examples, they would in almost every case be subject to one or other of two disadvantages: either, through the crowding of fortuitous circumstances, the moral import of the problem would be obscured, and so lose its impressiveness, or else this impressiveness would be gained by such an outlay of time and physical and moral strength as to neutralize its own possible benefits. Experience, undoubtedly, is the most efficient moral instructor; but, as Jean Paul says, the school fees are rather high, and we may add, the curriculum is rather tedious. Evidently, then, if we could find some substitute for experience, costing less and producing the same or a better effect, we ought to hail it as an important factor in education. If the drama, then, has any place in education, it must be on the ground that it takes the place of a large amount of experience and performs the same function, either as well or better, and not

that it takes the place of direct instruction addressed to the intellect. What, then, we may ask, is the value of experience as distinguished from intellectual instruction? It lies in this, that while intellectual instruction, however perfect, may simply remain in the memory, leaving the heart cold and the will uninfluenced, experience appeals strongly to the feelings and imagination, and through these affects the will. If, then, the drama is to take the place of experience, it must appeal to the feelings and imagination with the same result. Now, there can be no doubt that the drama, when properly presented, is eminently calculated to do this; and not only so, but it does it in a way in which experience can rarely accomplish it. By presenting the consequences of the moral problem in their isolation within a brief space of time, the drama adds much to their clearness and impressiveness; and, indeed, this is the very function of the drama. This result in no way conflicts with that article in Aristotle's definition of tragedy, according to which the purpose of tragedy is to accomplish, by means of fear and pity, the purification of such emotions. For what, after all, is impressiveness but the arousing and purifying of pity and fear.

From what has been said, it is evident that the drama, to educate, must aim above all things at impressiveness; and this it can do only under certain conditions, which may be regarded as technical rules of dramatic art. In the first place, the action in which the moral collision is worked out must be a unity, including everything that would tend to render the import of the problem impressive, and rigorously concluding everything of an opposite tendency, — everything that would distract the attention and withdraw it from the main issue. At the same time the utmost care must be taken not to trench upon the province of the pulpit or lecture-room by explicitly drawing the moral. This the audience itself must be allowed to deduce from the impression made upon it by the events of the drama. In the second place the subject chosen must be of a lofty character and the treatment ideal, and free from meretricious elements. And, above all, it must clearly exhibit the intrinsic difference between virtue and vice and the natural consequences of each. In the third place the subjects chosen and their working-out must be such as are calculated to appeal vividly and in a thought-stimulating way to the

audiences for which they are intended. It is sufficiently evident that many plays which would deeply move a highly cultivated audience would fall dead upon a rude and uncultured one; and the opposite is no less true. It may perhaps be observed that, although the drama has something for all conditions of men, its most beneficial effect as an elevating influence will be exerted upon the lowly, who compose the mass of mankind. Cultivated men are to a considerable extent guided by reason, whereas, in the words of a philosopher of the Middle Ages, "Simple men are more guided by representations than by reasons." We must not, therefore, in our devotion to high art, fail to recognize the value of those less pretentious dramas which find a response in the hearts of the lowly. As Lowell has so generously said, —

"It may be glorious to write
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
Once in a century.

"But better far to write some verse or line,
Which, seeking not the praise of art,
Shall make a clearer faith and manhood shine
In the untutored heart."

Having thus shown that the drama, being so much idealized experience, may with advantage replace in education a large amount of actual experience by presenting moral problems so as ultimately to affect and purify the will, we pass to the consideration of the next point, which is the present condition of the drama, especially in our own country, and its fitness to exert a beneficial influence as a substitute for experience in education. This part of our subject may be treated under two divisions: (1) the pieces represented on the stage, and (2) the influence exerted by those who represent them. It must never be forgotten that the character of a teacher has much to do with the efficiency of his instruction.

As to the former of these divisions, the pieces represented on the stage may, roughly speaking, be divided into four classes:

(1) What may be called the classical drama, including the plays of Shakespeare and other dramatists of the Elizabethan period, and those of such later writers as Dryden, Milton, Addison, Sheridan, Goldsmith, and others.

(2) Dramatized novels, both native and foreign.

(3) Translation from foreign languages, especially from the French.

(4) Original production of modern English and American playwrights.

Each of these divisions must be treated separately, inasmuch as, though all are open to objections from an educational point of view, they are not all open to the same objections. Evidently, the objections against the classical drama will be very different from those to be urged against the other three divisions. Indeed, it will surprise most people to hear that plays like those of Shakespeare are open to any objection whatever. From certain points of view these works will doubtless always hold a supreme position; but it does not follow from this that they are in every respect adapted to *our* stage.

We have little to urge against these from a moral standpoint, although George Eliot has said, "One has need of as nice a distillation as the bee's to suck nothing but honey from Shakespeare."

We cannot, however, agree with Charles Lamb, who maintained that the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of almost any other dramatist

whatever; but we may safely maintain that they are to some degree obsolete, and in many ways unfitted to influence in the highest degree the generality of people who attend our theatres.

The truth is, the problems of Shakespeare are in a great measure no longer our problems, his motives no longer our motives. The very conditions of life from which the majority of his plots are drawn do not even exist among us. A sentiment like this, —

“There ’s such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,”

finds no response in the American bosom. Indeed, our very existence as a nation is the result of a rebellion against that very order of things which forms the basis of Shakespeare’s dramas. It might even be maintained that Sophocles appeals more directly to us than Shakespeare, just as the Athenian republic is in many respects nearer to us than the English monarchy. Indeed, what the eminent German critic Freytag has said in regard to the Greek drama is in great measure applicable to the Shakespearian.

“The intellectual and ethical status of man, the relation of the individual to his race and to the high-

est powers of mundane life, our notion of freedom, and the ideas we entertain of the being of God have undergone great transformation. While a wide field of dramatic material has been lost to us, a more extensive territory has been won. Alongside the ethical and political principles which govern our lives, the ideas of what is beautiful and effective in art have developed."

Lignes

Bearing this in mind, we shall recognize that a lack of appreciation for Shakespeare's plays, as compared with works of far less artistic merit, is due mainly to the indifferent culture of the audience, and, in some degree, perhaps, to the plays themselves, which no longer completely reflect the moral problems which interest us. While their grandeur and truth must appeal to us and to all time, they have in some relations fallen into an historical position, as far, at least, as the popular stage is concerned.

We pass next to such pieces as are translations from foreign languages, and especially from the French. The objections to these will, of course, be very different to those urged against the English classical drama; they will be mainly of a moral character; for few dramas

can vie with those of the French stage in artistic construction and dramatic effectiveness. This, no doubt, accounts for their popularity on our stage; but these advantages are more than counterbalanced by their defective morality. This defectiveness lies sometimes in the mode of treatment. Not infrequently the moral collision is of an ignoble kind, and, therefore, altogether unfit for dramatic representation. This is the case with "Camille" and plays of that order, which, by investing certain relations with an air of respectability, tend to weaken our just moral aversion to them. On the other hand, many plots, in themselves unexceptionable, are worked out in such a way as to present vice in an attractive aspect, so that it pleasingly haunts the imagination, and tends to bribe the conscience. Of course these strictures on French plays do not in any way refer to the classical French drama,—the works of Corneille, Racine, and Molière,—or even to some modern political plays, as Sardou's "Diplomacy," and others. Objections that may be raised against Victor Hugo's plays are mostly of another order,—morbidness, horribleness of detail, overheatedness of imagination. Striking examples of these sins

against taste we find in "Lucrezia Borgia" and "Le Roi s'amuse."

From the other languages so little has been translated for the stage that what there is may be passed over in silence. We may merely remark that all foreign plays labor under the same disadvantage; viz., that they do not accurately mirror our problems.

We now take up our third class of plays; namely, those founded upon popular novels. Such dramas are open, first of all, to the same objections as the novels from which they are drawn; *e. g.*, frivolity of plot, mawkish sentimentality, conventionality, flippancy, vulgarity, and even downright immorality. Besides these they are liable to have other defects which, though due to their parent novels, would not be regarded as defects in the novels themselves; for example, long narrations and descriptions, episodic arrangement of scenes and consequent lack of unity in the action. An example of these defects is "Little Emily," founded upon Dickens's "David Copperfield." One criticism to which nearly all plays founded upon novels are amenable is, that, strictly speaking, they are to a certain degree undramatic, and, by depending

for part of their interest upon things external to the drama, tend to confuse the dramatic sense, whose existence is always a mark of high culture.

Our fourth, and last, class of plays includes pieces by modern English and American dramatists.

This class is so extensive and includes such diverse elements that we can hardly be expected to treat it exhaustively. Nevertheless, it does seem to have this general characteristic, that the pieces composing it tend rather to the comic and the burlesque than to the tragic and serious. This fact is perhaps as much due to the lack of tragic poets as to the lack of appreciation for the tragic on the part of audiences. Even the best of our recent poets have almost uniformly failed in their efforts to produce actable tragedies, — notably the greatest of them, Tennyson, Longfellow, Swinburne, Buchanan.

It may be said that on the whole the nearest approach on our stage to the tragic is the melodramatic, which in many ways may be said to be the abuse of the tragic, in that it uses the means of impressiveness, not to solemnize the mind and purify the will, but

to arouse the physical side of emotion and exhaust our nervous vitality. One leaves the theatre at the conclusion of such plays completely unstrung. Such mawkish, sensational, mock-heroic pieces, instead of producing a wholesome and purifying effect upon the mind, have rather a malarial and feverish tendency. Unquestionably, the best part of our modern drama is the comic, and there need be no question that it often has a beneficial effect. Plays like "Lord Dundreary" have done much to banish from the theatre of actual life certain weak and contemptible types of character by making them universally ridiculous. On the whole, the comic drama, though generally reckoned inferior to the tragic, is, when properly managed, hardly a less powerful force in education, and it moreover reaches a lower and more numerous class. But in order to do this, it must, at bottom, be serious, and have an earnest purpose; in other words, it must direct its ridicule against actual abuses, foibles, and follies, being careful to show the utmost respect to that which deserves respect. It was this fine tact, which, while seizing the truly ridiculous, bows before the good, the

true, and the beautiful, that lent such scathing force to the plays of Aristophanes, Molière, and Beaumarchais, and made them powerful agents in the moral regeneration of their times. Whatever objections may be urged against our comic drama are due to a lack of this tact. The American comedian, like many of his countrymen, in his effort to be funny at all hazards, very often fails to distinguish between ridicule and flippancy, which is but ridicule directed against what deserves reverence. Flippancy is the cardinal sin of American comedy, as, indeed, of much else in our literature and art. Few things short of vulgarity or obscenity have a more baleful effect on the tone and temper of men's minds than this same flippancy, which saps at its very foundation that fine reverence which Goethe, with good reason, regarded as the essential condition of all true education. If our comic writers had, instead of this indiscriminating flippancy, a true sense of the intrinsically ridiculous, they would find ample material in the conditions of our political and social life to employ their talents upon, with infinite advantage to our people and institutions. An

Aristophanes in Washington would do more than our President to grease the wheels of Civil Service Reform; while a Molière or a Beaumarchais in New York would go far to put an extinguisher upon anglomania, dudism, snobbery, and tawdry display, and to help the solution of the vexed question between labor and capital, by visibly exemplifying the remark of Swift, that the Lord shows the value which he sets upon money by the kind of people he gives it to! How would our boarding-school or boy-farming institutions look after a Molière had been imprisoned in one of them for a month or two, and survived to record his experience on the stage?

Besides these objections, which apply to very many of our modern plays, there are others which apply only to particular grades or classes of plays; such as those that might fairly be urged against all pieces written to exhibit the special characteristics of actors or actresses, which are often but mere mannerisms. These plays most frequently lack unity of action, moral import, and, in all cases, proportion. Another objection applies to the use of adventitious and meretricious means for the pur-

pose of exciting vulgar interest. Among such means are the introduction of notorious characters, merely on account of their notoriety; the use of glaring or gaudy scenic effects, the interlarding of the dialogue with popular slang, cheap repartee, local allusions, and unsavory insinuations. It is sad to think that a large number of our most popular plays derive their chief interest from these defects.

It would be impossible, even if it were desirable, to point out all the shortcomings of the modern drama; but enough has, perhaps, been said to show that a very large portion of it fails to perform the function which the drama ought to perform in education. But after all deductions have been made, there still remains a considerable residue of plays, especially from the classical period, to serve as a model and basis for a great educational drama, such as we may hope will some day grace our national literature and the literature of the world.

Having thus passed in rapid review the repertory of our modern stage, and pointed out its most salient defects, we come next to

consider the actors and their personal influence upon the drama which they present. It is no part of my purpose to criticise the private life of actors and actresses; but I should be neglecting an important element in the educational effect of the drama if I failed to notice the damage done to it by the reputation in which theatrical people are held by a large and respectable part of the community. This reputation is by no means flattering. To explain how it came into existence and to be as widespread as it is would require more space than I have at my disposal. About the fact there can be no doubt. Even Shakespeare complains that his "name receives a brand" from his connection with the histrionic profession. At all events, the important points for us to consider are: (1) that this prejudice against the histrionic profession has a certain amount of excuse; and (2) that this reacts prejudicially against the profession itself, by preventing many persons well fitted to adorn it from joining it. With regard to the former point, — namely, that the prejudice has some excuse, — it should always be remembered that the moral defects so often complained of in

actors and actresses are due in part to the same causes which render eminence in their calling possible; that is, sensuous and vivacious temperament, personal vanity, and the craving for immediate recognition and applause. They are, however, also due in part to the arrangements of the theatre and other circumstances incidental to the actor's mode of life. One must be little acquainted with that life not to know the extraordinary temptations to which the profession is exposed, and it is no small credit that it furnishes fewer criminals than any other class in the community.

As to the second point, there can be no doubt that the prejudice of which we have been speaking reacts injuriously upon the *personnel* of the theatre by preventing many respectable persons from entering the profession, and so leaving it mostly to those who have but a small stake in the world's opinion. Thus, through action and reaction, the character of the profession has for a long time remained unchanged, — at least in our own country. Signs, however, are not wanting to encourage us in the belief that this state of things will soon be remedied; that persons of the highest

respectability will enroll themselves in the histrionic profession, as, indeed, they have begun to do, and the stage take a position, in point of respectability, alongside the pulpit. Goethe says:—

“The theatre has often been at variance with the pulpit; they ought not, I think, to quarrel. How much it is to be wished that the celebration both of nature and of God were entrusted to none but men of noble minds.”

That Goethe's hope bids fair to be realized, we are led to believe from the words of Henry Irving—one of the few highly educated actors—in his speech last March at Harvard University. “The profession,” he says, “is steadily growing in credit with the educated classes; it is drawing more recruits from these classes. The enthusiasm for our calling has never reached a higher pitch.”

From all that has been said upon the drama and the actor, it is evident that we have no theatre at once popular and calculated to perform its proper functions in education. The question that remains to be considered, the third which we proposed to ourselves, is: How shall such a theatre be realized? Before

we can answer this question, and suggest means for the remedying of the present deplorable condition of the stage, we must look deeper into the causes of this condition. These nearly all lie in one fact, highly characteristic of our material civilization: The drama, like almost everything else in our day, has fallen under the iron law of political economy, and has thus become an article of merchandise. Obedient to this law of supply and demand, our theatre-managers ask only one question respecting any play or actor: How will it or he draw? — which means, how much hard cash will it or he bring into the till? This being so, the larger the public whose tastes he can gratify, the better. Aiming thus at the multitude with his vulgar, glaring playbills, which disgrace our fences, he takes the average taste and ideas of the multitude as his standard. These are of necessity conventional, and lacking in elevation. In this respect our drama stands at a great disadvantage as compared with that of the great periods when poets like Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Goethe, writing for an intelligent public, produced works corresponding to its

intelligence and taste. That the taste of the multitude is in the main conventional and far from elevated is shown in the most distressing way by what it applauds, which in most cases argues lack of intelligence and good taste.

If we now go a little deeper, and ask ourselves what is the cause of this unfortunate lack of fine discrimination, we must answer that it is due in part to the want of æsthetic education in early youth, and in part to subsequent associations and mode of life. It is a notorious fact that our educational institutions, from the lowest to the highest, do almost nothing to develop the dramatic, or even the artistic sense. In fact, that whole department of human education which the Greeks emphasized so strongly under the name of purification, and to which Aristotle assigned the drama as a powerful agency, is almost entirely overlooked in our education. Furthermore, the restless, anxious life of the average American, devoted as it is to the pursuit of wealth and mere position, leaves him little time or strength for the loftier occupations of existence,—history, art, science, philosophy, religion. Even when he does devote some time to the last, —

namely, religion,—the effect is perhaps more frequently to narrow and suppress thought than to broaden and develop it. Indeed, the mass of Americans are at that stage of culture when they wish to be amused, without having to reflect. They look for relaxation of spirit in something less serious than their daily occupations, and not in something more serious. They do not appreciate that an ascent into the calm empyrean of earnest thought is more restful to the jaded spirit than a descent into the garish world of burlesque and caricature.

What they most care for is to see their lives reflected in a mock-humorous way, which is anything but holding the "mirror up to nature." Here we are confronted by the oft-recurring difficulty of action and reaction. We cannot elevate the public until we elevate the theatre, and we cannot elevate the theatre until we elevate the public, so long as the drama is a question of supply and demand. In order, then, to elevate either one or the other, we must elevate both at once, and each through the other. In other words, we must, in our homes, schools, and colleges, educate the rising

generation to an appreciation of the earnest drama and its import; and, on the other hand, we must furnish it with an earnest drama to appreciate. Thus, education in its narrower sense can be made a preparation for education in its broader, life-sense; and the latter, idealized in the drama, will be made to react upon school education, by familiarizing educators with great ideas, presented as object-lessons. In this connection let me quote a few more sentences from Henry Irving. The drama in its "highest developments acts as a constant medium for the diffusion of great ideas, and by throwing new lights upon the best dramatic literature it largely helps the growth of education. . . . Some of the most thoughtful students of Shakespeare have recognized their indebtedness to actors.

" . . . Am I presumptuous, then, in asserting that the stage is not only an instrument of amusement, but a very active agent in the spread of knowledge and taste?"

We are now, at last, brought face to face with two perfectly definite questions, answers to which it is the ultimate purpose of this paper to suggest. These are: (1) How shall



we make the rising generation capable of appreciating the truly dramatic, and of critically discerning it in the plays put before them?

(2) How shall we procure and present to it and the general public the truly dramatic in a suitable form?

The answer to the former of these questions is, "By instruction," which ought to begin in the family, and be carried on through all the grades of education.

In the family alone, a great deal can be accomplished in this direction. Children are in the highest degree imitative, and many of the commonest games in which they participate — such as, playing house, London Bridge, Oats be beans, and barley grows, Going to Jerusalem — are the rude beginnings of the drama. These, and similar games thoughtfully developed and improved, could not fail to be excellent first lessons in dramatic education. This would not only develop in the children the dramatic sense, but would also accustom them to amuse themselves in a rational manner. The importance of doing this can hardly be over-estimated; for, if we consider carefully, we shall find that the great-

est good and the greatest evil in men's lives are learned in their hours of amusement, and, conversely, their moral condition can be accurately gauged by the sum of their amusements which they seek in their leisure hours. It may truly be affirmed that no more important step can be taken in education than by teaching people to amuse themselves in a dignified way, and that few things would more powerfully contribute to this end than the accustoming of them from childhood to witness, and take part in, properly conducted dramatic representations.

Once for all, we must rise above the foolish and injurious prejudice that there is any antagonism between education and amusement. Almost the contrary is true; for amusements properly conducted are among the most powerful and far-reaching means of education. Indeed, Aristotle, from whose authority on matters of education there will hardly be any appeal, maintains the function, not only of the drama, but of the fine arts generally, to be *educative amusement*,—an opinion in which the world will certainly concur as soon as it has recognized the claim of amusement to a

high place among educational agencies. The function of the fine arts is to present the ideal world toward which we are struggling, and in the contemplation of which the soul, wearied with the often hopeless-seeming moral struggle of actual life, finds rest, refreshment, inspiration, and renewed strength.

But to return to the question of dramatic education. The course of training begun in the family ought to be continued throughout the whole school-life, including that of the university, and be treated as an essential part of the curriculum. This might be done in a variety of ways. For example, every educational institution ought to require the production, at certain festive seasons of the year, of well-selected plays, previously studied and rehearsed with the utmost care. This is done in some of the best English schools. At the same time, pupils should be encouraged, under proper supervision, to attend good plays in the public theatres, and the import of these plays made clear to them, either before or after. In the higher institutions of education there ought to be special departments of literary and, above all, dramatic criticism. The course in this

department should include mainly two things: (1) the reading of the dramatic masterpieces of ancient and modern times, with analysis and exposition from the highest dramatic and philosophic point of view; (2) the interpretation of the greatest critical works on the drama, beginning with the *Poetics* of Aristotle, whose value even in our day can hardly be over-estimated. The lessons of this course should be varied at certain seasons, and impressed by the production, on the part of the students, of some of the plays that have been studied. With what success this might be done was shown, a few years ago, by the production of the "Ædipus Tyrannus" at Harvard. There seems no good reason why any institution having courses in any of the fine arts, such as music and drawing (Harvard has courses in both), should not include a course in dramatics, generally acknowledged to be the highest of all the arts. How readily students would take to such a course is shown by the fact that many college societies annually produce plays as a part of their amusement. Some of these plays are original and not wanting in merit. If there existed such a course in our chief

universities, we might look forward with some confidence to a race of playwrights, actors, and critics who would insure the total reformation of the stage.

We have thus endeavored to answer the first of the two questions proposed; namely, How shall we make the rising generation capable of appreciating the truly dramatic? In doing so we have, in fact, also furnished an answer to the second; namely, How shall we present to the general public the truly dramatic in a suitable form? This partial answer must now be completed. It is not enough to have developed playwrights, actors, and critics; we must further provide that they shall have a fruitful field for the exercise of their powers, — in other words, that they shall have a large public. No doubt, by their unaided exertions, they would in some degree be able to secure this; but in order to do so in the most extensive and beneficial way, they would require such co-operation as should render them independent of the iron law of supply and demand. Evidently, so long as the present demand determines the supply, there will be no place for the productions of cultured dramatists.

In order to reform the drama, the supply must be made to determine the demand. And this is not impossible; for as Goethe, who, as theatre director, critic, actor, and playwright in one, certainly had plenty of experience in the matter, says,—

“By presenting excellence to the people you should gradually excite in them a taste and feeling for the excellent; and they will pay their money with double satisfaction when reason itself has nothing to object against this outlay. .

“It is only because they are not used to the taste of what is excellent that the generality of people take delight in silly and insipid things.”

Indeed, we must contrive to give to the public, if we wish to elevate it, not what it desires, which is often foolish enough, but what it requires for its highest welfare.

In a country like ours, where the censorship of the theatre is neither possible nor desirable, it seems possible to furnish the public with an educative drama in only one of two ways. We must either convince all theatrical managers of the dignity and sacredness of their office, and induce them to defy the iron law by giving the public what it needs rather than

what it desires, or else some agency, conscious of this dignity and sacredness, must take this matter entirely out of their hands.

Inasmuch as the conversion of the theatrical managers, who are too often inaccessible to any motives save those of gain, seems unlikely to be sudden, if at all possible, we are thrown back upon the second alternative.

The question then is, When the matter is taken out of the hands of the ordinary theatre director, in whose hands shall it be placed? Here only suggestions can be given. The first agency that naturally suggests itself is the State or community. While assured that the drama is an educative force, and ought to take its place along with other educative influences, we must bear in mind two facts; namely, (1) that the question how far the State or community may with advantage interfere, even with school education, is still unsettled; and (2) that this is still more true in regard to the question of what may be called life-education, to which, in reality, the drama belongs. But so long as the State does assume the responsibility of public education, and bestows care and pecuniary support on libra-

ries, museums, and galleries of art, with a view to elevating public intelligence and taste, there seems no good reason, to say the least, why it should not assume the same responsibility for the theatre, which has, or might have, a more direct and powerful educative influence. We have already seen that in Goethe's belief even the State itself might derive great advantage from assuming the direction of the theatre, and placing upon the stage the ideal side of the lives and occupations of all ranks of society. But whatever advantage might directly accrue to the State from assuming the responsibility of the theatre, we have ample proof to convince us that State superintendence has, in many cases, been of great benefit to the theatre, raising it out of dependence upon the caprice of popular taste, and rendering it a powerful agent in popular education. In ancient Greece, where the drama reached an unparalleled eminence of splendor and usefulness, the theatre was not only entirely under the control of the State, but formed an essential part of the public worship; and so thoroughly convinced were the Athenians of the value of the dramatic representations to the public

that in the time of Pericles — the most glorious period of Athenian history — a law was passed providing that the entrance-fee for all the citizens should be paid out of the public treasury.

Likewise, in modern times, many of the best theatres in Europe are managed by the State. This is true in many of the German States. Every one will remember the extreme care bestowed upon the Weimar Court Theatre by Goethe and Schiller, who, indeed, wrote some of their best works for it. At the present day the court theatre of the little principality of Saxe-Meiningen is said, by competent critics, to be one of the best in the world; and there are many other high-class theatres under State direction in other parts of Germany, — for example, at Munich, Carlsruhe, and Stuttgart.

In Austria and in France, also, where the theatre forms a more important element in life than, perhaps, anywhere else, it is largely under State direction, and this with the very best results. The Théâtre Français, universally looked up to as the model theatre of Europe, being under State management, is able to mould

instead of serving public taste, and has thus given to France, where it is said "poet never grew," the best acting drama in the world.

It thus appears that in suggesting that the State in our own country should undertake the direction and maintenance of the public theatre, we are not proposing any mere visionary scheme, but a plan that has frequently been realized with very great and obvious advantages.

Granting the State's competency to assume the direction of the theatre, there now arises the very important question, How shall the State be made to feel its obligation in this matter, and induced to take some practical action in regard to it? It must always be borne in mind that State authorities are not justified in introducing any means of reform, however excellent theoretically, which does not correspond to an expressed public demand and bid fair to be supported by public sentiment. That the demand for a reformed theatre is widely felt in our own country, there can be no doubt. Since I began writing this paper, I have received from a college friend a letter, from which I venture to quote a sentence or

two as indicative of the feeling of the best of the rising generation:—

“The American drama of to-day I cannot consider as a successful educator. We have a few good plays, such as ‘The Banker’s Daughter,’ and one or two of Bartley Campbell’s; but for the most part our stage is given over to plays of the feeblest and most slangy description. The people evidently want to be amused, and are ready to laugh at and pay for anything that looks funny. Yet, on consideration, amusement as recreation is a branch of education, and I sincerely hope that the people will soon graduate from some of the nauseous stuff that is now produced.”

How, then, shall the feeling here expressed be made to assume such a form as shall justify the State, or let us say a city-government, in taking action in the premises? The answer is, What the State may be expected to do must first be realized, by way of example and inducement, under private auspices. When under these auspices it has been shown that the reformed theatre meets a public demand, and is, by its elevating and educating influence, increasing that demand, the State will, no doubt, feel justified in stepping in and handsomely completing what private societies have

begun. Examples of this carrying-on by the State of enterprises, originally private, are by no means rare. In England the telegraphic system, originally established and owned by private companies, is now entirely managed by the government, to the great advantage of the public. In most European countries the same is true of the railroad systems. In all civilized countries it is true of the postal system, which plainly could not have been developed under any but State auspices to its present degree of usefulness. What is true of the telegraph, the railroad, the post-office, is, in a measure, true of more directly educative institutions,—libraries, museums, art galleries, etc.

Our view, then, in fine, is that while our schools and colleges are being induced to give theoretical and practical instruction in dramatics, and thus preparing the rising generation to appreciate a good drama, those philanthropic persons, who see the value of the drama as a possible means of universal education, should form themselves into an association, with some such name as "Society for the Reformation of the Drama," and devote

themselves to furnishing the public with an artistic and educative drama.

From the foregoing arguments it will be sufficiently evident what the chief tasks of this society will be: (1) To obtain the direction and, if possible, the possession of well-appointed theatres; (2) to study carefully the condition of public intelligence and taste, and to produce upon their stage pieces calculated at once to attract the public and elevate it; (3) to give every possible encouragement and opportunity to earnest playwrights and actors, and to frown down those of an opposite character; (4) to exercise a rigorous but just criticism upon all plays whatsoever produced in public theatres, and with a view to this, to give all aid and countenance to honest critics; (5) to agitate in favor of the introduction of dramatic study and criticism into all institutions of general instruction.

In order to establish such a society as that whose chief aims we have just enumerated, it is obvious that two main conditions would be essential: (1) A body of highly cultured men, keenly alive to the artistic and educational possibilities of a true drama, as well as to the

crying defects of the drama at present existing; (2) a sum of money sufficient to enable such a body of men, formed into a society, to carry out the ends we have mentioned. As to the former condition, our country can fortunately boast of many highly cultured and earnest men, who are only waiting for some enthusiastic leader to initiate such a movement as I have attempted to sketch, and to unite them into a society for the furtherance of the same. As to the second condition, — namely, that of funds, — in such an organization of cultured men there could hardly fail to be some financiers, and to their practical judgment we must leave the question of ways and means.

And with this my task is ended. I have attempted to show, (1) the ideal and true relation of the drama to education; (2) the present condition of the drama in our own country, and (3) to suggest ways and means whereby the drama may be lifted out of its present degraded condition and reinstated in its legitimate position as a powerful agent in education. Whether I have accomplished the task appointed to me with satisfaction to my hearers,

it is for them to say, but of one thing I am sure, and let this be my excuse for having attempted it: If I could but impart to one of my readers one half the enthusiasm which I feel for the cause of the drama in America, one half of my conviction respecting its elevating and educative possibilities, and one half of my readiness to spend and be spent in its behalf, I should feel that these humble efforts of mine had not been in vain, and I should look forward with the greatest confidence to the approaching day when America shall have a drama of her own, — a drama worthy of the lofty, civilizing, and educating moral position which she holds, and, let us hope, will ever hold, among the nations.

GOETHE AS A DRAMATIST

"WE may affirm without arrogance that we of the present day are better informed with regard to the highest artistic effects of the drama and the use of technical methods than were Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe." These are the words of Gustav Freitag, a German writer standing in all but the first rank of literary men and dramatists, and in the very foremost rank of dramatic critics. In writing a criticism upon the work of a man of Goethe's eminence, some part of which, at least, must be unfavorable, one is fain to take refuge under the shield of so great a critic, and thus avoid all possible charge of arrogance. Not only as a shield, however, have I quoted the above passage; it is of great significance as pointing out the two distinguishing characteristics of the successful playwright: (1) A clear ✓ conception of highest artistic effects; (2) The power to apply the best technical methods for the production of these.

We must here make a careful distinction between a playwright and a playwriter. And in the present paper we wish especially to insist upon this distinction. It is not our intention to criticise Goethe as a writer of plays, or his plays as mere literary productions, or what are called closet dramas, but to consider him strictly as a playwright, and his plays as productions intended for representation on the stage. The dramatic value of a play is its effectiveness upon the stage. Whatever other merits a play may have, psychological, philosophical, or ethical, if it is not effective upon the stage, it lacks the first essential of a good drama. A psychological, philosophical, or ethical discussion may be cast in the form of dialogue, or even of a drama, — as, for example, the Dialogues of Plato; but these are not dramas in the proper sense. In order to arrive at clearness in this matter, we must first inquire what kind of effectiveness we have a right to expect from the drama, and, secondly, through what technical methods this effectiveness may be best attained. Of course we must not expect from the drama every kind of effectiveness, — as, for instance, the effect of a philosophical argument, sermon, or oratorio; we must not look for the

effect produced by an intoxicating draught or by Niagara.

First, then, let us consider what constitutes dramatic effectiveness. The question might be answered by *one word*, — viz., the term “drama,” which properly means action; so that a drama without action is a contradiction in terms. The essential element, then, in dramatic effectiveness is *action*. It must, however, be action of a peculiar kind, — in a word, it must be motivated action; and the motive must at once be rational and apparent to the spectators. This Goethe himself believed, and has admirably expressed in words put into the mouth of Wilhelm Meister with regard to Shakespeare’s characters:

“These very mysterious and composite creatures of nature act before us in his plays as if they were clocks with cases and dial-plates of crystal; they show in their determination the lapse of the hours, and at the same time we can recognize the wheels and springs that drive them.”

The drama, then, in its true sense, is an action, a rounded and complete action, whose various parts or moments are evolved and connected by intelligible motives.

These motives may have two sources, — that

is, they may be either in the characters or in the exigencies of the action itself. For example, the fortunate termination of "Iphigenie" finds its motive in the perfect sincerity of Iphigenie's character. In "Egmont," also, as well as in "Götz," the hero's fate is plainly due to defects in his own character. On the other hand, the task imposed upon Hamlet of putting his uncle to death plainly arises from the exigency of circumstances, — the moral demands of his time, — and can in no wise be laid to the charge of Hamlet's character. It may here be remarked that the ancient differs from the modern drama in the source from which it mainly draws its motives. The ancient dramatists looked for their motives chiefly in the exigencies of circumstances, which to them were synonymous with necessity, destiny, or fate, whence the majority of ancient plays are fate-dramas. Modern dramatists, on the other hand, — and pre-eminently Goethe, — seek their motives chiefly in character, whence most good modern plays are, to a very large extent, character-dramas. This difference accounts, in some measure, for the superior effectiveness of the ancient drama, inasmuch as motives originating

in external circumstances are far more easy to portray than those drawn from character. Probably the highest type of drama is that in which the motives are drawn equally from circumstances (not necessarily conceived as fate) and from character. This balance of motives we find in Shakespeare's best plays, — for example, "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet." In a word, we may say that the prime and fundamental condition of dramatic effect, as such, is perfect motivation. A series of brilliant scenes, however effective otherwise, is not dramatic. In this the drama differs from history, that in the former the events are connected by perfect motivation; in the latter, merely by time and imperfect, often non-apparent, motivation.

Although motivation is the first essential of dramatic effect, it is not, by itself alone, sufficient to insure that effect. Other and secondary conditions are requisite. In the first place the motives must be of a particular kind, since all motives are not dramatic motives. True dramatic motives are such as an audience feel to be human and rational, — such as men like themselves in similar circumstances would act upon. Consequently, all motives that affect only eccen-

tric or exceptionally good or wicked characters, must be used sparingly, if at all. The same is true of all motives of a miraculous, revolting, or fantastic kind. What is regarded as miraculous, revolting, or fantastic, is not the same in all ages or among all peoples; for which reason every dramatist must keep very steadily in view his own time and public. For example, some things that the Greeks forbade to be represented on the stage as revolting, — such as assassination, murder, and suicide, — we permit and applaud. The stabbing of Cæsar, the suicide of Brutus, the death of Romeo and Juliet, of Gretchen, etc., are examples of this.

In the second place, dramatic motives, in order to be effective, must produce certain results.

(1) They must produce passion and action, and not merely dialogue, however philosophical, beautiful, or moral it may be.

(2) The motivated action must be so arranged and rounded as to arouse a steadily increasing sympathy, expectation, and anxiety — or, as Aristotle puts it, pity and fear — on the part of the audience, and then to satisfy these emotions.

(3) The ultimate result of the whole action must be to solemnize the mind by revealing to it the workings of the human heart and the moral order of the universe, and to send an audience forth refreshed, strengthened, and inspired for the duties of life; in a word, it must result in what Aristotle calls *purification*.

Having thus stated, in general terms, the true artistic effect of the drama, we come next to consider by what technical methods these results are to be obtained. Inasmuch as the first condition of artistic effectiveness in the drama is complete and thorough motivation, our first inquiry must relate to the mode in which this may be reached. It is evident that this will in large measure depend upon the choice of subject, the fact being that it is much easier to find motives for certain lines of action than for others. Indeed, however this choice may be influenced by fashion or by the intellectual and æsthetic idiosyncrasies of the author, the subject must always be one capable of being transformed into a dramatic idea, — that unital and initial germ from which the whole drama is developed. There is hardly any point in which the genius of an artist is more apparent than in this ability to see

what subjects are capable of being permeated with the living, causative, formative, dramatic idea.

And this is especially true of the dramatist. The question of what is really dramatic has been much agitated; but one may affirm that dramatic, and more especially tragic subjects, are those containing the elements of some great moral collision, taking place in a sphere of life in which the characters must be supposed capable of expressing this collision in speech and action. This collision itself must be of a kind to give ample opportunity for the display of passion and action. This regulation effectively excludes all subjects containing collisions which are fought out within the breast of the individual, or in philosophical and moral discussion with others. Moral collisions that lead to no outward action, but only to monologues or conversations, are essentially undramatic. It would follow, of course, that a subject could not be chosen from among a people of a low degree of culture, or a people whose lives are not dramatic. Granting now that the subject is properly chosen, the conditions specified being fulfilled, the question arises how the subject is to be developed so as

to produce these dramatic effects we have mentioned above, — namely, (1) abundant display of action and passion in the character; (2) the excitement of a steadily increasing sympathy on the part of the audience, and the satisfaction of the same; (3) the moral inspiration and physical refreshment that come from the clear presentation and solution of moral problems. To exhaust this question is not easy, and, in a brief paper like this, only the more prominent means for producing effectiveness can even be mentioned.

In the first place, then, care must be taken to concentrate interest; and this can be done only by preserving the unity of action, which action must not be understood to mean a single event, but a connected series of events, — or, as Aristotle says, a *praxis*. In every drama the action must be strictly *one*, — undivided. It must then revolve about a single character, or a single group of characters, involved in the conception of the subject. What is true of the drama is true of every other art. A picture, for example, must have a single point of interest, about which everything else is grouped. It follows from this, that those accessory characters

and groups which are necessary to the development of the plot, and as foils to the principal characters, must be subordinated, and not receive any prominence beyond what they derive from their relation to these characters. Any attempt to give them prominence on their own account would only distract attention, scatter interest, dilute sympathy, cause confusion, and diminish effectiveness.

→ We must here note that the unity of the actions, so essential to the effectiveness of a drama, does not depend solely upon the unity or oneness of the characters, or central group. Actions belonging even to a single character do not necessarily form a dramatic unity. A drama is never a biography, nor a series of adventures or episodes. In other words, a mere historic or personal connection between events is utterly different from that relation which produces dramatic unity. A dramatic action, therefore, is one which not only has its centre in a single character, but must be a single action in the sense that all its parts are connected as cause and effect, and every event must tend to advance or relieve the progress of the action. And not only so, but the action must have a natural

beginning in a *deed* or juncture forming the collision of the piece, and an ending in which the problem involved in the collision is naturally solved. *Naturally* solved, I repeat, because there are unnatural solutions, and these are essentially undramatic. A natural solution is one whose elements are found in the action and characters of the piece itself. An unnatural solution is one violently introduced from without, in the shape of miracle, chance, or some catastrophe of nature. Each of these is a *Deus ex machina*, or, as the Italians say, a *salto mortale*, which is forever interdicted in art as nullifying its true purpose. Other unities have, at certain times, been insisted upon, especially those of time and place; but these are unessential, and have almost universally been discarded.

In the second place, it is not only necessary to concentrate and sustain interest, but to arouse it properly; and this can be done only by putting the audience in possession of facts sufficient to enable them to understand the nature of the collision involved, and the relation of the different characters to it. This Aristotle happily calls the *δέσις*, or tying of the knot. This must be done in the opening scenes of a play, which

in a certain sense must always be introductory. Any attempt to put the audience in possession of the necessary facts by means of a prologue — though favored and practised by some dramatists, such as Euripides, Seneca, and Alfieri — is inartistic, and bespeaks incapacity on the part of the dramatist. A prologue hardly becomes more artistic even when it takes the form of a mere explanatory dialogue, in no way advancing the action of the play. The opening of a piece which puts the audience in possession of the necessary facts will, by a good artist, be so arranged as to be brief, and a part of the action of the play; for only in this way can it arouse the highest interest.

In the third place, the interest, once aroused, must be steadily sustained, — which means, not that it must be kept uniformly at the same degree of intensity, but that it must gradually increase until it reaches its climax and satisfaction in the solution of the piece. In a word, we may say that the interest must be compound interest. At the same time, care must be taken to retard the interest until the climax can be fairly reached. This is perhaps the most difficult task imposed upon the playwright, inas-

much as it involves a profound knowledge of psychology and an immense power of grading and directing all the parts of his play to a single end. With this in view he must carefully avoid introducing anything, however tempting, not bearing directly upon the action of the play, and also the placing of less interesting scenes after more interesting ones; or in any way introducing mere explanatory matter without action. For this reason, long messages interrupting the action of the play, and similar things, should be avoided. A play in which scenes can be omitted or transposed, without affecting the interest of the piece, is by that fact alone a poor play, and argues an inferior playwright. Perhaps the worst of all possible plays is one consisting of a series of scenes in which the action does not advance, or the characters are not brought into any different relation to each other at the end from that which they occupied at the beginning. Such plays are the "Hecuba" of Euripides, and the "Brunhilde," written some years ago for the actress Janauschek.

In the fourth place, the interest, having been aroused, and sustained throughout the play, must in the end secure complete satisfaction.

Such satisfaction we are wont to call poetic justice. By this we mean that every one of the principal characters must at the conclusion of the piece meet with the just reward of his deeds, thus impressing that most profound of all moral truths, often so dimly visible in our actual lives, — namely, that there is an inexorable moral law ruling in the world, and giving to each man an exact recompense. Only in this way can a play produce that exhilaration and moral inspiration which are the ultimate tests of the value of a drama. But although a play, like every true work of art, ought to produce a moral effect, the artist's intention to produce this effect should never be apparent. In other words, a drama ought not, either in whole or in part, to be a sermon or moral lecture.

The moral effect, on the contrary, ought to be apparent in the very construction and action of the play, and to be deduced therefrom by a spontaneous action under the influence of emotion on the part of the audience. We ought no more to look for a sermon in a play, than we do in the Venus of Melos or the Hermes of Praxiteles. True works of art, like lofty characters, exercise their influence, not through what they

do or say, but through what they are. As Schiller puts it, "There is nobility even in the moral world. Common natures pay with what they *do*, noble natures with what they *are*."

Such, then, are some of the principal and essential conditions of dramatic effectiveness: (1) choice of subject, noble and capable of being developed and motivated into scenes of action and passion, — in other words, into a dramatic unity; (2) absolute unity and probability of action; (3) interest artistically enlisted, sustained, and satisfied at last by poetic justice. In order to deal with Goethe as upright judges, and not arbitrarily, as tyrants, we have now only to apply the principles laid down, in all their rigor, to his dramatic productions, — or, at least, to such of them as may be supposed in any way to determine his position as a playwright.

In doing so we shall deal mainly with those plays which may be regarded as marking stages in his dramatic development, — "Götz von Berlichingen," "Egmont," "Torquato Tasso," "Iphigenie," and "Faust." Although Goethe had previously written some smaller pieces for special occasions, his career as a serious playwright begins with "Götz von Berlichingen."

This play, of which the first draught was written in six weeks, in the year 1771, was conceived under the influence of a powerful enthusiasm, due to the reading of Shakespeare. With respect to the effect of this first acquaintance with the work of the English dramatist, Goethe himself says, speaking through the lips of Wilhelm Meister: —

“I cannot recollect that any book, any man, any incident of my life, has produced such effects on me. . . . They seem as if they were performances of some celestial genius, descending among men to make them, by the mildest instructions, acquainted with themselves. They are no fictions! You would think, while reading them, you stood before the unclosed awful books of Fate, while the whirlwind of most impassioned life was howling through the leaves, and tossing them fiercely to and fro. The strength and tenderness, the power and peacefulness of this man, have so astonished and transported me that I long vehemently for the time when I shall have it in my power to read further.”

It was in this frame of mind that Goethe wrote “Götz,” drawing his theme from the autobiography of the old national hero of the Iron Hand, — a theme capable of being treated in the manner of Shakespeare. He wrote under

the influence of an imitative enthusiasm, and not in accordance with any theory of dramatic art. Indeed, at that time he had not arrived at any such theory. This fact accounts in great measure for the merits and the defects of the work. The defects are very great; but it has real merits, and, indeed, from a purely dramatic point of view, this piece, though the earliest, is unquestionably the most popular and effective of Goethe's plays.

Nor is this fact difficult to explain. Shakespeare's influence upon Goethe had been of a most healthy and stimulating kind. It had roused the spontaneity of his genius, which was naturally great, and supplied him with admirable models, without subjecting him to any æsthetic rules or theories. And this last negative advantage was perhaps as valuable as the other two positive ones; for so strong in all Germans is the tendency to work according to rules addressed to the understanding, and so fatal is this tendency to all German artists, even those of high genius, that Goethe could hardly have failed to be injured in his work by any such restrictions.

This, indeed, we shall see, actually took place,

with much damage to Goethe's dramatic work, after he became interested in dramatic theory. Not only will theory never make an artist, but it may even damage one, especially if he be a German.

"Götz von Berlichingen," in spite of its popularity and its extraordinary value in the history of German literature, will not stand the test of rigorous dramatic criticism. The subject, indeed, is well chosen, being one in which the unity of action might easily have been preserved, strict motivation introduced, and abundant opportunities found for scenes of action and passion.

But, unfortunately, Goethe was unable to permeate this subject with a dramatic idea, and hence the work remains a series of interesting but disconnected scenes, which do not form in any sense a dramatic unity. The interest is scattered, and broken into fragments, with neither proper gradation, climax, nor satisfactory solution. Much crude historical matter, connected, as historical matter usually is, by mere chronological succession, instead of dramatic motivation, remains to burden the play. The result is, that the catastrophe does not follow necessarily

from the conditions of the piece, and leaves the demands of poetic justice unsatisfied. Götz, it is true, is a tragic character, and this for two reasons. The former of these is his thoughtless, incautious, and fond confidence in Weislingen, a man who had abundantly proved himself fit for a place in the lowest circle of Dante's *Inferno*; the latter is his failure to see that his efforts are directed against the natural advance of civilization, and in favor of an obsolete feudalism. At the same time, these defects are not sufficient to reconcile us to the hero's dying as a coward might, with a feeling that his whole heroic life had been worse than vain. This inartistic ending is the more to be regretted, inasmuch as it might easily have been avoided. The fault is due in part to Goethe's following too closely the facts of history, in defiance of the æsthetic law, which demands poetic justice, — that is, a recognition of a man's virtues as well as of his defects; but it was due perhaps even more to the circumstance that, when "Götz" was written, the author was in revolt against the German political system, just as Schiller was in revolt against the social system when he wrote "The Robbers," and wished to excite popular

indignation against that system by making Götz appear as a martyr to it. This purpose to excite indignation must be set down as inartistic, as all tendentious purpose in art is.

In spite of all these great defects, the play has a certain amount of confused effectiveness, both in the action and in the characters. Notwithstanding Götz's lamentable ending, he and his little group of associates remain inspiring characters; and this is so true, that the play has always, perhaps more than any other of Goethe's works, been a favorite upon the stage. This is certainly only in a small degree due to its artistic merits, since the interest which it excites is not, strictly speaking, a dramatic interest; nevertheless, the general tone of the play is so healthy, and its action so full of varied life, that the ultimate effect is in a large degree inspiring and exhilarating. As early as 1799, the drama of "Götz von Berlichingen" was thought worthy of a translation into English by so great an artist as Sir Walter Scott. It ought, perhaps, to be remarked that Goethe wrote three, if not four, editions of "Götz," and that only the third was really intended for the stage.

"Götz von Berlichingen" may claim two great

merits. It was the first truly national German play, and it was also the play in which was first fully realized what Lessing and others had so earnestly striven for without completely achieving, — a breach with traditional rules, and the complete liberation of the German stage from the artificial and conventional drama of France, which had so baneful an influence on the literature and morals of Germany. The work has thus the merit of marking a most important epoch in German literature.

There must have been considerable outcry on the part of the critics against this departure from dramatic rules and precepts, and this must have come, in part at least, from critics whom Goethe felt bound to respect; for we find him writing to his friend Kestner: "I am now engaged upon a drama for the boards, in order that the fellows may see that, if I please, I can observe rules and portray morality and sentimentality." To what drama Goethe here refers, we cannot say with certainty. It may have been "Faust," the idea of which was fermenting in his mind at this time. Be this as it may, the first draught of "Faust" which, in the main, was written shortly after "Götz,"

though not published till many years later (1790), corresponds accurately with Goethe's description, inasmuch as it follows dramatic rules perhaps more than his other dramas, and deals with morality and sentimentality. And although "Faust," as a completed work, did not appear till sixty years later, we may here insert what has to be said concerning its dramatic properties. Paradoxical as it may seem, "Faust" is a drama to which the standard of dramatic criticism should not be applied, if we do not wish to make it appear a failure, as, indeed, Vischer and other eminent critics have shown it to be. Indeed, as a whole, it does not belong to the class of acting plays, but to that of literary and philosophical dramas. The dramatic idea in itself, though well and profoundly chosen, is far too vast for a single drama, and almost even for a trilogy. Moreover, many of the scenes are almost incapable of being presented on the stage, such as the two Walpurgisnächte and the Prologues. It is true that the whole is now annually played at Weimar, but under circumstances altogether exceptional, and such as are hardly possible on any ordinary stage. Moreover,

the dramatic unity is frequently violated, the scenes being often bound together, not by dramatic motivation, but by the personal identity of Faust. In fact, it is largely a series of episodes in the life of an individual, Faust; and, according to Aristotle, the episodic drama is the worst of all. The only part that lies within the sphere of strictly dramatic criticism is the original fragment, published in 1790, founded on popular legend, and embodying Faust's relation to Gretchen. This part will stand the severest dramatic criticism. The subject is well chosen, and capable of being thoroughly permeated by the dramatic idea. It also affords excellent motives for scenes of action and passion. It rises naturally to a climax, and descends as naturally to the catastrophe, which satisfies all the claims of poetic justice. The interest is sustained throughout, and the final effect is in the highest degree solemnizing and purifying. It cannot be otherwise than a matter of regret that Goethe did not complete his "Faust" in accordance with his original conception; for the additions which, after his metaphysical and critical studies, he made even to the first part, not to speak of the second, essen-

tially injured the unity of the *action*, and considerably impaired its effectiveness for the stage.

The other three plays of Goethe which we purpose to criticise as typical productions are "Egmont," "Iphigenie," and "Tasso." These dramas were written nearly at the same time, — between 1777 and 1789, when Goethe was in the full possession of his powers. They may therefore be considered his highest dramatic efforts. First came "Egmont," 1777-1785. The subject is an event in the rebellion of the Netherlands against Spanish domination, and therefore may be considered a *national* subject. Indeed, it is said that the play was intended as a companion to "Götz." Here, for the first time, we see the baneful effects of Goethe's attempt to apply dramatic rules in a comprehensive way. And the result as a whole is a mechanical production, devoid of dramatic unity.

This criticism may appear unjust, especially as the play has held the stage for so many years, and possesses a certain effectiveness. But, after all, this effectiveness is not truly dramatic, being due in great part to a few graceful love-scenes

scattered through it, and in some degree also to a certain historic and political interest, which has no artistic bearing. The chief effectiveness is derived, not from the dramatic idea, which is political, but from a series of domestic scenes utterly foreign to this idea. For the fundamental idea, or collision, is this: A nobleman finds himself placed between duty to his conquered and rebelling countrymen and fealty to their conqueror, under whom he has accepted service. Being of a generous, brave, tender, reckless, and unreflective character, fond of pleasure and popularity, he countenances his countrymen in their seditious practices, thereby giving offence to the conquerors, from whom, nevertheless, he has not sufficient patriotism or foresight, as Orange had, to disconnect himself.

This tragic weakness brings about his destruction. To such a political idea, the domestic scenes between Egmont and Clärchen are plainly alien; and, as a matter of fact, they have no bearing upon the action of the play, and in no way tend to relieve or develop it. Indeed, the only case when she in any way enters into the main action of the drama is after the catastrophe is certain, when her ghost appears as a

Deus ex machina in the garb of Freedom, from a supernatural world, whose introduction is not justified by the plan of the play. It is a rule of dramatic art, that the miraculous and supernatural should not be introduced into a play unless they have been suggested as credible agents early in the plot, as they are in the case of the witches in "Macbeth," the ghost in "Hamlet," and others. Indeed, the introduction of Clärchen in the winding-up of "Egmont" is inartistic, being unmotivated, and, as Schiller said, operatic.

Besides the weakness of the termination, the play has other glaring defects. Many of the scenes are too prolix, and so loosely connected that they not only could be, but actually are, transposed when the play is represented, which shows that the interest is not properly graded. A number of the scenes consist of mere padding of talk; indeed, Goethe might, without impropriety, have called those scenes in which the citizens so fortuitously meet to gossip, the choric part, and assigned to his play a chorus of Netherlanders. There is no binding and loosening in the play, and of course no peripeteia. On the whole, then, in spite of its popularity,

from the standard of just dramatic criticism the play must be regarded as a failure.

In passing from "Egmont" to "Iphigenie," we suddenly enter a new world. "Iphigenie" is in almost every respect a complete contrast to the play we have just considered. Here Goethe was dealing with a subject which had already been dramatized by two great playwrights, Euripides and Racine.

The main incidents of the play, therefore, were already given in the title, "Iphigenie in Tauris," and a new motivation alone remained to be supplied. This, it must be admitted, Goethe has accomplished with admirable taste and success. In fact, the motivation is so entirely his own, that he has given us one of the best of character-dramas instead of a fate-drama. The dramatic unity is preserved throughout; the tying and untying of the knot, although classically simple, are managed in a masterly way. Strangely enough, although the characters are in large measure foils to each other, they are all noble and dignified. The character of Iphigenie, combining princess and priestess, is perhaps the purest and stateliest that Goethe or any dramatist ever conceived. One lingers before it with

ever-increasing delight, as he does before the Venus of Melos, or the Immaculate Conception of Murillo. One especial feature of the "Iphigenie" is the limpid flow of its stately language, which has, perhaps, never been excelled. To use the words of Keats, it reads like "the large utterance of the early gods."

Though entirely modern and un-Greek in tone and sentiment, in form it is as perfect and self-contained as the Parthenon of Iktinos; and, like the Parthenon, its effect is calculated for an audience of highly developed taste. The play contains little external action or violent expression of passion to attract a popular audience. Its strength lies mainly in its psychological *truthfulness*, which in the hands of highly cultivated actors can be made very impressive. Although exception might be taken to a few features of the play, such as the Euripidean prologue, and the somewhat too epigrammatic and philosophical character of the dialogue, "Iphigenie" must be regarded as the most finished of Goethe's dramatic efforts; and this is clearly shown by its ultimate effect, which leaves the mind in the attitude of solemnity, purity, and lofty courage.

From "Iphigenie" we pass to the last of Goethe's typical plays, — "Torquato Tasso," finished in 1789. In the choice and development of this subject, Goethe had to depend upon his own resources; and when we compare the play with "Iphigenie," we see at once how much he owed in the latter to his Greek predecessor, especially in the matter of incident. "Tasso" is almost purely a character-drama, and is well motivated from beginning to end. Nevertheless, the result in the two cases is very different. What in "Iphigenie" was pure, living classical stateliness, has here become rigidity, coldness, formality. Instead of a Parthenon of lucent Pentelic marble, we now enter the ice-palace of a Russian autocrat. The cardinal defects of this play are largely due to a false choice of subject, which does not lend itself to dramatic development. An almost sure test of a good play is that its dramatic idea, or collision, can be fully stated in a few words. "Macbeth," "Hamlet," "Iphigenie," may be cited as examples of this. In "Tasso," on the contrary, it is extremely difficult to state, even in a prolix way, the dramatic idea. The truth is, Goethe took an incident from the life of an historic character,

and was unable to lift it out of its historic wording into the refinement of a living dramatic idea. A plebeian poet of passionate temperament finds patronage and high favor at the court of a powerful prince. In the moment of his highest triumph he is brought face to face with another favorite of the court, — a nobleman of practical and diplomatic turn of mind. In the conflict which follows between the two natures, the one-sidedness of each is brought out. A dispute arises, which has to be settled by the prince, according to a purely conventional and unjust standard, bringing disgrace upon the poet, who was really blameless, and acquitting the culpable nobleman. Partly under the influence of the prince, the nobleman is induced to admit his wrong, and sue for reconciliation, which he ultimately effects, and draws from the poet an enthusiastic acknowledgment of his superiority. This story, though long, does not really state the entire plot of the play, for it does not include the very important *rôles* played by the two heroines; but this fact only bears out the statement that the idea is undramatic. And, indeed, these *rôles* are almost unrelated to the main collision, — so much so that at the end the rela-

tion between Tasso and the princess is left entirely unsolved. The same inferior and fragmentary art to which we called attention in "Egmont" reappears here. The effectiveness of the play when represented is due in large measure to a few delicately constructed and tender love scenes, which have no real relation to the dramatic idea. In the arts of the playwright and the novelist, love scenes are too frequently the refuge of the destitute.

They are the refuge of the destitute, because they are sure to interest a large public, whatever the character of the work may be in which they appear. In introducing such scenes, Goethe shows that he was a true German himself, and knew the character of his countrymen. In a similar manner, a French painter who cannot attract attention by legitimate means will frequently resort to the introduction of nude figures, sure that under any circumstances these will appeal to something in his countrymen, if not to their artistic sense. To sum up the dramatic characteristics of the play, we must say that, although conforming in many ways to the rules of art, as a drama it is a distinct failure, and was so considered even by Goethe's contemporaries.

At the present day the play has almost disappeared from the stage.

This ends our consideration of the acknowledged typical dramas of Goethe. If time permitted, other minor dramas might have been considered with interest, but the general result would not thereby be materially affected. What, then, we may ask, is that result? Is it such as to justify us in affirming that Goethe was a great playwright? Without detracting from Goethe's greatness in other directions, and indeed heartily acknowledging it, we must, in accordance with the verdict of rational criticism, answer the question in the negative. And in order to justify this answer, we have only to generalize what we have already stated in particular. Goethe's short-comings as a playwright may be said to be four in number: —

1. A fundamental lack of the dramatic sense, which in great measure prevented him from recognizing what subjects were capable of being transformed into dramatic ideas, and so becoming dramatically effective.

2. A fundamental lack of constructive power, which prevented him from producing works distinguished by organic unity; thus leaving

his dramas either a series of almost disconnected scenes, like "Götz" and "Egmont," with an operatic termination like the latter, or united only by an abstract notion, not arising out of the dramatic idea, but external to it, as in "Tasso" and in "Faust."

3. The lack of passionate expression and vigorous action, leading him to dwell upon descriptions of characters and scenes rather than upon living actions and stirring events.

4. His inability to deal with the legitimate rules of dramatic art, — at one time leading him to set them aside altogether, at another time allowing him to be completely overmastered by them.

Of these cardinal defects some may be attributed to Goethe's nationality, while one, at least, — namely, the lack of constructive power, — must be ascribed to Goethe himself. As compared with the other leading nations of Europe, the Germans may be said to be an undramatic people, deficient in passionate expression, overflowing energy, and, above all, in the keen dramatic sense of the ludicrous and incongruous, which is the salt of active life, and which is incompatible with their phlegmatic temperament and

extreme sentimentality. That these national drawbacks were not necessarily fatal to a great dramatic genius, when relieved by a strong constructive ability, was shown in the case of Schiller, and, in a lower degree, by Lessing and Iffland, all of whom, though inferior to Goethe in other respects, are superior to him as playwrights. Goethe's failure as a playwright, therefore, was due in large measure to his lack of constructive power,—that is, of the ability to hold many things together, and reduce them to a living organism permeated by a dramatic concept. This defect appears not only in Goethe's dramas, but also in his other works,—notably in "Meister,"—and may account for his failure in the plastic and graphic arts. As a poet, Goethe was essentially epic and lyric, but not dramatic. Germany owes him her best modern epic,—namely, "Hermann und Dorothea,"—and a large number of the best lyrics in the language. And, in confirmation of this, it is a curious fact that Goethe's most perfect drama, "Iphigenie," is, like the Greek plays which he imitated, a combination of epic and lyric elements.

If we were to look into the facts and habits of Goethe's life for an explanation of his failure as

a playwright, we might perhaps find it in three things: (1) his tendency to allow a long interval to elapse between his first conception of a piece and its execution and completion, his views respecting life and art changing materially in the meanwhile; (2) his exceptional good fortune, which left him untouched by many forms of human experience; (3) his ever-increasing withdrawal from the world of human strife and suffering, which is pre-eminently the dramatic world. The first of these facts accounts for much that is fragmentary and inorganic in "Faust," while the second furnishes a sufficient reason for Goethe's inferiority as a playwright to the poor, much-tried Schiller, who during the most of his brief life was deep in the world's hardships and sufferings. It remains forever true that "we learn in suffering what we teach in song."

But if, in a technical sense, we cannot speak highly of Goethe as a playwright, we must not fail to acknowledge his other great merits in connection with the drama, his abundant efforts to raise it from coarseness, conventionality, and thralldom to French ideas, and to make it an integral part of the national literature of Germany. By his long-continued personal efforts in con-

nection with the stage at Weimar he raised the standard of acting in Germany, and by his admirable and sympathetic criticisms, he elevated the standard of dramatic taste; and last, but not least, by introducing Shakespeare to the notice of his countrymen, he gave a lasting impulse for good to German literary effort and life.

Beside all these great merits, his failure as a playwright — insist upon it as we may, and as we have a right to do — seems but a spot on the face of the sun, which we mention oftener in order to excuse something in ourselves than to detract from the life-giving fulness of that luminary.



THE END.



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